

CURRENT NOTES

Helping Atari Owners Through the World of Computing

Vol. 13, No. 9

November 1993

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MAXTOR	7345S	345	14 Msec	64K	\$360
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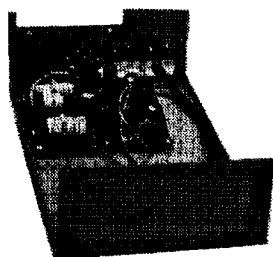
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Complete Atari Hard Drive Systems

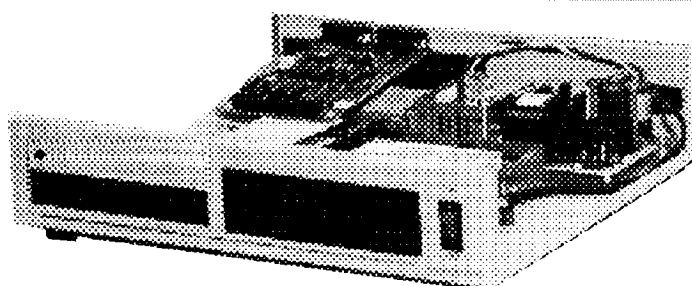
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From the Editor's Desk

As you will immediately see when you turn the next page, this is a sad month for the *Current Notes* family. Just a couple of weeks ago, quite unexpectedly, Frank Sommers passed away. We are dedicating this issue to Frank.

If you have only been with *Current Notes* for the last year or so, you won't have any idea who Frank Sommers was. But long time subscribers will undoubtedly be saddened by the news. Frank first submitted a review back in the fall of 1985. It was on *Hex*, an ST graphic strategy game, and it was published in our October issue. It was quite delightful and was quickly followed by a review of *Mudpies* in November and *ST Writer* in December.

The following year, Frank agreed to jointly author with me an "ST Update" column. He helped with the column throughout the year and was very prolific as a reviewer. I still recall some of those reviews as if I had just read them a little while ago. Perhaps you will recall some: *Final Word*, *Ist Word*, *Regent Word*, *Brataccus*, *Hippo Concept*, *Financial Cookbook*, *Cornerman*, *Supra Drive*, *Leaderboard*, *eStE Clock*, *Mean 18*, *Tournament Disk #1*, *Regent Word II*, and the *How to Use the 520ST* video.

By 1987 Frank agreed to take on the post of "ST Editor" for *Current Notes*. In that position he now solely authored the "ST Update" column and, in addition, coordinated all of the ST product reviews for *CN*. His own reviews, unfortunately, were now curtailed to only four or five a year. Although most readers weren't aware of all of Frank's assistance, I can assure you, it was an immense help to me. He solicited and worked with the various reviewers (and some columnists), took their copy and put it into *Word-Perfect*, and then, *Calamus*, and provided the first pass of editing. Frank continued in that position for the next five years.

In addition to all his contributions in the production of *CN*, Frank was also the leading spirit in building a remarkable cadre of devoted *CN* contributors. Through all of these years, Frank, a superb gourmet cook, delighted in hosting a monthly *CN* luncheon. With the release of each issue, half a dozen or so of the writers in the Washington area would gather at Frank's home and be treated, not only to fine dining, but also to a lively and entertaining conversation including, quite often, a friendly, but heated, exchange of views.

Yet, the computer world was only a small part of Frank's life. Indeed, his four children, although they visited frequently and happily engaged their father in friendly debates over the political fortunes of the country and the world, knew but little of Frank's "retirement" activities with *Current Notes* and the Atari world. As a small tribute and remembrance, therefore, I have promised his family to put together a book of all the pieces Frank wrote for *CN* over the years. They would also appreciate it if any of us in the Atari world, who may have fond memories of conversations or interactions with Frank, would jot down a few words telling them about the experience. You can send your notes to me and I will gladly pass them on to the family.

Frank, who as ST Editor, helped me pick the *CN* Author of the Year each year always ruled himself out of the running. So, although I could never award Frank the "Author of the Year," let me offer this final "Hats Off" award to a dear friend and colleague, Frank Sommers, *Current Notes* "Author of the Decade."

- Joe Waters

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Time to Renew?

Take a peek at your mailing label. If you see the expression **9311** on the first line, then your subscription expires in 1993, month 11, i.e. this November issue is the last one in your current subscription. If you see **9312**, your subscription will expire in December. Please **RENEW** as soon as possible to avoid missing any issues of CN. You can renew using your MC or VISA card by calling (703) 450-4761 (evenings). Many thanks for your continued support!

Moving?

Don't forget to send in a **CHANGE OF ADDRESS** notice if you are moving. Current Notes is distributed via 2nd class U.S. mail. The post office does not forward 2nd class publications; they throw them away!

The Cover: As family and friends gather to celebrate the Thanksgiving Holiday, the Lynx (and in some lucky houses, the Jaguar) will keep young and old kids alike happily occupied. Photography (c) 1993 by Joyce and Cindy Waters.



A Final Hat's Off to **FRANK SOMMERS**



Frank Sommers, 66, died at his home in Chevy Chase, Maryland on October 9, 1993. For seven years Frank was the ST editor of *Current Notes*. During those years Frank made many friends among those who wrote for and read this magazine. His loss will be keenly felt by all of us.

Frank was one of the few renaissance men left in this modern world of increasingly narrow specialization. His interests crossed boundaries into areas that were only unlikely in their aggregate. He faithfully served his nation in areas most Americans will never know, described by his lifelong colleagues as one of the "honorable men" in the often murky world of Cold War politics. He was fond of classical music, literature in many languages, public speaking, and gourmet cooking. He was an avid tennis player and a sometime hunter. He pursued his brand of liberal politics with the fervor of a convert. Frank championed his adopted Atari stepchild through the early years of hope, gave encouragement when it faltered, and kept the faith as its vitality slowly seeped away. He never abandoned Atari, just recently completing a review of GEMulator III.

For all his hobbies, however, it was people that Frank loved. He was a devoted husband and father, a faithful and constant friend. His zest for life penetrated and surrounded everything he did. Those of us who were close to him relied on his unfailing sense of humor and his ability to give the right sort of encouragement when it was needed. To those executives in Atari's corporate offices fuming at some barbed comment in Frank's monthly column, or to those software vendors or reviewers who ran afoul of Frank's high expectations, I can tell you with dead-level certainty that you have all been hoodwinked. You never had an argument with the real Frank Sommers; he reserved serious arguments for

serious matters. Most of you never got a chance to see the twinkle in his eye as he laid the phone in its cradle. Those of us who did, knew that to Frank the conversations about his many hobbies were almost always more important to him than the content.

The computer world has a place of high adventure to Frank, a technological wilderness where there were no maps and endless new delights. To him, it was an immense playground and he unceasingly sought out new playmates for fresh journeys of exploration. Computers were invented during Frank's lifetime, after all. How many of us know men and women of his generation who fear computers and consider them indecipherable? Frank never lacked the courage to try new things or the determination to learn something new—as long as it was fun!

— Milt Creighton and Don Elmore

Final Hats Off!

For the machine that has given us such constant high performance and satisfaction and the company that makes it, we would like to say, though we've belted you and flayed you, by the liven god that made you, you have rendered us a whale of a service, Atari. It's not just the thousands of dollars saved a year by not having to hire a secretary, or the printing costs for the daily flow of desktop fun and trivia, or the sheer pleasure and relaxation derived from any of a number of games. It has, in fact, become an essential part of our life, and we expect it to continue to be for years to come, no matter what.

So, Atari and all of you in Atari out there in Sunnyvale, we offer a resounding Hats Off! . . .

Frank Sommers
"ST Update"
November, 1992

Monitoring the World of Atari

Frank Sommers' ST Update Column, 1986-1992

1986

- Apr: Where are the 1040STs? Final Word, Megamax C, Abacus ST Books, Versasoft Releases dBMAN.
- May: From Prototype to Product, New Product News, In the Black, Final Word and Compatibility.
- Jun: Hardware News, Software News, COMDEX, Tiny Thrillers.
- Jul: Hard Disk Drives Still at Atari, Mac Emulator, MS Word on the ST, Haba vs Hippo, CPM Emulation.
- Sep: Santa Claus Enhanced ST, TT, Software IBM Emulator, Laser Printer, G-DOS, Microsoft Write.
- Oct: Magic Sack, ST4160 Banned in Switzerland, Enhanced ST, Regent Word Released, CES.
- Nov: Atari Public Stock Issue, IBM Emulator, Magic Sack, Atari HD Ships, Star Glider, Zoomracks, Flight Simulator.
- Dec: COMDEX Surprise: No 2040ST, No 4160ST, No Laser Printer, No CD-ROM, No Atari IBM Box, No EST, No TT.

1987

- Feb: Atari, Reality, & The Market; Mega ST4; ST Software List Approaches the 1000 Mark.
- Apr: Hannover Ware; Mega, Memory, and Meandering; Hard Drive Lockup, WordPerfect for the Atari.
- May: Laser Printer Unlikely Before XMAS, Mega ST Due in May, Atari IBM Emulator Still Being Worked On.
- Jun: The Atari Family, Laser May Ship by October, Blitter Upgrade Kit Delayed Till Fall.
- Jul: COMDEX, Atlanta; WordPerfect Delayed; Megs Will Have New TOS.
- Sep: The Board Room Hath Wrought, Blitter Out; Atari to Sell 1040 in Music Stores; pc-ditto Boosts the ST.
- Oct: Mega ST4 a Qualified Success; Mega Compatibility Issues; Atari I200 Baud Modem for \$99.
- Nov: Atari at War: Dealers, Developers, Customers; Atari Transputer, EST, and TT Rumors; Word Perfect and dBMAN.
- Dec: COMDEX: Atari Shows PC Line; Transputer & ABAQ, UNIX, and CD-ROM Drive; DeskSet on The Atari Laser.

1988

- Feb: pc-ditto V3.0, Microsoft Write in Warehouse, Word Up and Publishing Partner 2.0 due in March.
- Mar: Electronic Change, Signum in From Europe, MS Write Hard to Install, Turbo ST Speeds Your ST.
- Apr: Heat in the Atari Kitchen, Severe Shortage of Atari Product in US, Calamus and Publisher ST to Debut.
- May: Hats Off to Publisher ST, Dealers Complain About Mega Requirements While Shipments Go to Europe.
- Jun: Pub Partner Prof, Calamus (Beta), and WordPerfet at CEP Show; Battleship, Barbarian, Deflector.
- Jul: Unusual Headlines, No PC's for the U.S., Bundling, UltraScript Coming, Europe Awash in Games.
- Sep: Hats Off to Word Perfect, PPP Beta Ships, New Games Obliterator, Typhoon Thompson, and Jet.
- Oct: Mike Dendo Joins Atari, Rising Prices, PPP to Ship in October, Federated Undercuts Dealers.
- Nov: Pocket Computers & Atari England, Plants and Dealers and Things, Monitem to be Available by Xmas.
- Dec: A Year of Nothing New, 86's Dominate COMDEX, Fleet Street USA, pc-ditto has Surprises.

1989

- Feb: A Year Full of Hope? UltraScript & DeskSet, Atari Has Best Quarter Ever, Hats Off to Falcon
- Mar: Atari Postscript Package, The Silent Promotional, Entice & Deny, Atari CDROM Still Just Around the Corner
- Apr: Leaner Meaner Atari, CR Rates ST as Top Choice, ISD Releases Calamus 1.09, TOS 1.4 Not Quite Ready
- May: Atari STacy at COMDEX, TOS 1.4 Mystery, TT Out to German Developers, pc-ditto II Coming

- Jun: Atari's Phobia, Shiraz Shivzhi Quits, Sam Tramiel Tells Dealers Atari to Sell 500,000 Machines in '89
- Jul: TOS/TT Mystery, Dealer Frustrations, Portfolio Appearance, Release Dates for New Hardware
- Sep: Satraps, Summer Noises, Re-Aligning Realities, and Some Good News.
- Oct: TT's & STe's & TOS 1.4's & Wall Street & Fleet Street, plus Ink Savers & New Delivery Dates.
- Nov: A Feast at the Fest, The Revolution, Lawsuits, Games, New Dates and the Future.
- Dec: pc ditto II?, TT?, STe? Lynx? Portfolio, Comdex Surprises? and ...?

1990

- Feb: Atari in 1999, Lynx, Portfolio, Atari Stock, the STe, Wall St. Rose Garden.
- Mar: Dealers Distraught, Atari Stock Slides, But STe & TT Could Save the Day.
- Apr: No Product, White Lightening and the STe, ST Plus, and a New GDOS.
- May: The Ship Comes In, Stacy's for Sale, E.Germany Arrives, Atari Explorer Mis-Cues, Hats Off Nathan Potechin.
- Jun: Smiling Stockholders But Cloudy Skies, Lower Prices, Model Problems, and Great Entertainment Software.
- Jul: TT's in Canada, A New Face at Atari, Atari & the USSR, Lynx vs Turbo Graphics Express, Portfolio Embroglio.
- Sep: New Leadership, Dynasties, Hardware Havoc, Personnel Moves, Another Dealer Departs.
- Oct: The Magician Remains Silent, Dusseldorf vs Glendale, Whither Art Thou, TT's?, Atari Stock Swan Dive.
- Nov: Collision at Atari?, An Atari Credo, Will COMDEX Do It?, Atari Stock, What Will Be and What Won't Be.
- Dec: COMDEX, Success for Atari, New: TOS & GDOS, 14" Color Monitor, SLM605 & Mega STe.

1991

- Feb: Once Again Atari Restructures, Price Reductions for STe's & Lynx, Mega STe Appears, Stiff competition Ahead for TTs.
- Mar: ST Bests IBM PC, Gregg Pratt Makes the Right Noises, Atari Attempts Plastic Surgery.
- Apr: STe Hot Seller, Mega STe Is Here, Atari Vows Mass Distribution and Strategic Partnerships.
- May: Atari's New Niche-CEPS, Atari in the Future, a Dealer's Inside View, and Hats Off to L&Y.
- Jun: Atari's New Dealers' Delight, Atari Rent-A-Factory, and Atari in Former East Germany.
- Jul: Atari's Dealers' Meeting Post-Poned, IBM & Apple Cozy Up, Farewell, H.B.Monroe.
- Sep: Two Day Meeting of Atari's Aegis Dealers, Business War Ends, Quo Vadis TT's, FMS GDOS Now Shipping.
- Oct: Atari's New Financial Horizons, New TT? Strumph Stays Home, More Power in'92.
- Nov: Users Romance at WAACE, New Newsletter, New 'Cover Boys,' and New Factory?
- Dec: Hands on in Chicago, Lynx a Lot, and the Mystery of the MMU's and GLU's.

1992

- Feb: Catching the Wave of the Future, Multimedia, What It Means and What It Is.
- Mar: IBM, Beware! Michel-Angelo Is There! The Falcon Is Coming, and ST NoteBook?
- Jul: Milwaukee Atarifest, Games in US, Price Wars, Toad Teaches Users, & Now is the Future?
- Oct: Trials & Tribulations of the Amiga, Can Commodore Pull It Off? Can Atari?
- Nov: Down Memory Lane, Falcon Flutters But Still Not Flying, Hats Off! Atari

In addition to all of the above, Frank authored 40 additional articles during his eight year association with CN. From all of us, Frank, thanks for the memories!

Atari Industry News and Announcements

New Programs/Upgrades

Carter's Announces Paper Plates

Carter's Creative Computer is pleased, proud and excited to announce the availability of *Paper Plates*, *Calamus* templates for Paper Direct's pre-printed paper products.

Paper Direct (1-800-A-PAPERS) is a mail-order only company catering to the home-based Desktop Publishing industry. Among the items they offer are over 100 professionally designed, distinctive, colorful, laser-compatible, pre-printed papers in the form of Letterheads, tri-fold Brochures, Business Cards, Post Cards, and more.

Now, with 'Paper Plates' products, *Calamus* users can quickly, easily and cost-effectively produce many forms of unique printed materials that give the appearance of having been produced by a large graphic arts/printing business, and at great expense to someone.

1. Choose from Paper Direct's pre-printed papers.
2. With *Calamus* running, load the corresponding "Paper Plate."
3. Add your own text/graphics using the "Paper Plate" as a guide.
4. Remove the "Paper Plate" and print.

The printing may be done directly onto Paper Direct's paper and used as the final product, or onto plain white laser-paper as camera-ready-copy to be reproduced onto Paper Direct's paper via some other method.

Paper Plates is available now for \$39.95 retail. Users, dealers and/or distributors should contact: Carter's Creative Computer, 2321 Pinneberg Avenue, Rockville, Md. 20851. Phone: (301) 424-6672 (9am-6pm EST).

CodeHead Announces Warp 9 v3.80 With Extend-O-Pak

The long-awaited upgrade to *Warp 9* is here! *Warp 9*, the amazing screen accelerator with additional fast-load features and screen saver capability, has upgraded to a new version, 3.80. The new feature list includes:

- ★ Fully compatible with the Falcon 030 computer and SpeedoGDOS;
- ★ Includes 7 completely new *Extend-O-Save* modules!
- ★ Seven of the previously-released modules have been enhanced, adding Falcon compatibility and new features, such as Alternate Screen, Test mode, Falcon "true color" support, and more.
- ★ A newly-designed *Warp 9* Control Panel provides easier access to all options and allows you to configure which page of features will appear upon the opening of the accessory.
- ★ A new program, *Extend-O-View*, runs as an application for *Extend-O-Save* modules so that you can simply dou-

ble-click on modules to load and view them! Or install *Extend-O-Save* modules right in your *HotWire* menu to select them with a single keypress or mouse click.

★ A new accessory, *EOS Timer*, handles a new generation of *Extend-O-Save* modules, which operate through the GEM event system. This allows modules to do disk access, and make many other types of system calls previously unavailable to *Extend-O-Save* modules. The *Slide Show* module mentioned below makes use of these new features.

★ New *MakeFast* program provides users of TOS 1.0 and 1.2 a faster bootup of *Warp 9*.

★ Now comes on two floppy disks containing over 1.3 megabytes of files. Disk two contains 20 *Extend-O-Save* modules from CodeHead Technologies and eight modules from other authors.

★ Includes a 30-page manual addendum documenting all new features and *Extend-O-Save* modules.

The new *Extend-O-Save* Modules have their own special features including:

Slide Show—Picture files are displayed in an automatic slide show. The slide show displays pictures in any of the formats supported by *Warp 9*, including beautiful 256-color pictures on the Falcon 030.

Flying Thrones—A take-off on the popular Flying Toasters screensaver available on other platforms. *Flying Thrones* includes a separate program that allows you to load your own images/animations and can create your own version.

Rain, Man—Expanding circles appear on the screen, like drops of rain water hitting the ground.

Things That Go Bump—The blinking eyes of various creatures randomly appear and disappear, accompanied by optional night sounds.

Spotlight—A circular section of the screen roams around a dark background as if a flashlight or searchlight were lighting it.

Filled Shapes—Random shapes with variable number of sides appear randomly, filled with random fill patterns.

RAM Page—The screen fills with an ASCII representation of the internal memory of your computer, providing page after page of interesting and unique screen displays. You might be surprised at what you've got inside—and it's not Intel.

Warp 9 V3.80 with Extend-O-Pak is available now. The retail price remains at \$44.95. Owners of previous versions of *Warp 9* can upgrade to v3.80 for \$25 plus \$3 shipping (\$4 Canada, \$6 overseas). Send us your master disk and \$28 to receive the upgrade. For more information, contact your local dealer, or: CodeHead Technologies, P.O. Box 74090, Los Angeles, CA 90004. Phones: Tel (213) 386-5735; Fax (213) 386-5789; BBS (213) 461-2095.

Maxwell Announces Silhouette Colortrace

Greenbelt, MD—20 October 1993. Maxwell CPU has today announced that *Silhouette Colortrace*, the long awaited upgrade to its popular autotracing and graphics program *Silhouette*, will ship in the first week of December, 1993.

Colortrace, originally announced in February 1993, has met with some delays in development in the past few months. But the author, Tim Reyes (T.REYES), feels confident that it will be ready for a December release.

If you have already sent in your upgrade fee and your original disk, your copy of *Silhouette Colortrace* will be shipped at the time of the release in December. No checks will be deposited and no credit cards will be billed until your upgrade ships.

We thank you for your patience regarding this upgrade and for your continued interest in the program. We honestly feel that *Silhouette Colortrace* will be an indispensable graphics tool for Atari computer users.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with *Silhouette*, it is a graphics package that allows creation, conversion, and editing of graphics files. It works both with bitmap and vector graphics and can convert between the two.

Silhouette Colortrace adds color capabilities to the mix and supports a wide range of monochrome, greyscale, and color graphic file formats, both bitmap and vector based. It also supports Speedo GDOS.

If you would like to upgrade to *Silhouette Colortrace* from any other version of *Silhouette*, please send \$25 (+\$3 shipping) along with your master disk to Toad Computers. Upgrades will include a brand new, 120+ page manual.

Silhouette Colortrace retails for \$119.95 and will be available at an introductory price of \$99 through Toad Computers for a limited time. It includes the new 120+ page manual and attractive retail packaging.

For more information contact: Toad Computers, 570-F Ritchie Highway, Severna Park, MD 21146-2925. Phones: (410) 544-6943 Information (Upgrades); (800) 448-8623 Orders (New Sales Only); (410) 544-1329 FAX; (410) 544-6999 BBS. Electronic Mail: GENie: "TOAD-SERV." or "T.REYES"; Compuserve: 75300,714.

Dealer inquiries are invited. Contact Eastern Front Distributing Co., (Wholesale Division of Toad Computers) (410) 544-6753 or (800) 967-7449 or contact Pacific Software Supply, (800) 327-0425.

Missionware to Represent Fair-Dinkum Product Line

John Hutchinson, better known in these parts as "Hutch," programmer-extraordinaire, has decided to concentrate on programming instead of marketing. Therefore, Missionware Software is very pleased to announce that, beginning October 1, 1993, we will be representing Hutch's current product line. Soon, you'll be able to purchase these fine Fair-Dinkum products directly from us. Naturally, you can continue to purchase the products from your favorite dealer as well.

Beginning October 1, Missionware Software will be the official distributor of:

Crossword Creator II: The program that's both fun and educational! Soon *CWCII* will also be available in alternate languages, such as French, German and Dutch.

Word Search Creator: Do you like playing word search puzzles? It's even more fun to make your own puzzles. With *Word Search Creator*, it's simple and fun.

Puzzle Pack: For the best deal on both of the above packages, make sure to check out *Puzzle Pack*. It's a combination of both *CWCII* and *WSC*!

Cryptographer: Remember those decoder rings you had when you were a kid? Well, now you can use your computer to encode and decode secret messages.

In addition to Hutch's own programs, Missionware Software will also pick up distribution rights to Rhea-FX's *Cyberdrome—The HoverJet Simulator*. Naturally, we'll continue to distribute our current line of software including:

Flash II: This is the telecommunications program of choice for all Atari users. We've released our 3rd version in less than two years (v2.11) and are close to releasing our fourth (v2.2).

lottODDS: If you're a serious lottery game player, this program is a must-have. We're now releasing V1.2, an upgrade that makes *lottODDS* compatible with all Atari computers up through the Falcon.

Printer_INITIALIZER: This is the desk accessory that helps "un-befuddle" computer users who are "befuddled" by their printers. It makes printer setup a snap from within any GEM-based program.

CyberPaint: Although not released yet, we'll soon be shipping a new version of this excellent paint-and-animation program that will work on all Atari computers.

Mecha-Naught: If you like maze games, you'll love this new game written by Douglas Engel. The Mecha-Naught is a remotely piloted tank which you must control to save the human race!

Because of this major expansion of our business, Missionware Software wants to make certain that you continue to obtain the support you've come to expect from us. Therefore, we're opening a brand-new support category in the GENie ST Roundtable just for our products. We're also providing support on CompuServe in the Atariven conference (Section 10—Missionware) and on Delphi and BIX. You can also contact us via the Internet at jtrautschold@bix.com.

John Trautschold, Missionware Software, 354 N. Winston Drive, Palatine, IL 60067-4132, (708) 359-9565.

John Hutchinson, Fair-Dinkum, P.O. Box 2, Los Alamos, NM 87544, (505) 662-7236.

Industry Update

AtariUser Offers Mini Subscription Deal

John Nagy of *AtariUser Magazine* has returned to monthly publication and is offering a three issue mini-subscription to entice new readers. The October issue was released at the Glendale AtariFest in September and future issues are in the works. A three-issue subscription sells for only

\$5.00! To get your mini-subscription, pick up an *AtariUser* at your club or dealer or send \$5 with your name, address, and phone number to: AtariUser, 249 N. Brand Blvd, Glendale, CA 91203.

ATARI UNITED! DiskMagazine Debuts!

ATARI UNITED! announced that the first regular issue of its DiskMagazine will be released in mid-October, 1993. A special preliminary issue of the DiskMagazine was released through STEVE's Software at the Glendale Atari Show in September. The magazine will contain news, reviews, press releases, program demos, public domain software and any other information that might be of interest to owners of Atari TOS computers. The floppy-disk based magazine features an interface developed by Bry Edewaard and Scott Ettinger. The reader is compatible with any version of TOS, from the original STs to the Falcon030 of today and is readable in any resolution with at least an 80-column display.

Gordie Meyer, managing editor of the *ATARI UNITED!* DiskMagazine, expects the contents to cover a wide range of topics that most users in the Atari community will find beneficial. While a small part of the community is active online, and gets word of new or improved products almost immediately, most Atarians often get that information weeks or months after it first appears, if at all. The *AU!* DiskMagazine is an attempt at bridging that informational gap. The DiskMagazine will strive to be a source of solid information and support that the average user needs. It will also focus on providing support of user groups, with a regular "showcase" column featuring various user groups through out the United States. In addition, *ATARI UNITED!* is offering blanket permission to user groups to reprint or reproduce any or all contents of the DiskMagazine unless specifically noted otherwise.

ATARI UNITED! is seeking advertisers for the DiskMagazine, to keep the cost of obtaining the DiskMagazine at a minimum. Anyone interested in advertising in/on the DiskMagazine should contact Gordie Meyer at one of his addresses listed below. *ATARI UNITED!* is also looking for volunteer writers, and also welcomes the submission of any press releases related to the Atari TOS computer.

ATARI UNITED! DiskMagazine is available for individual subscription at \$16.00 a year. (4 issues a year, published quarterly). Individual issues may be purchased at \$4.95 by contacting Gordie Meyer. User groups that would like to subscribe at a special rate should contact Gordie Meyer at the address listed below.

For information regarding the DiskMagazine or to subscribe to the magazine, please contact: *ATARI UNITED!* DiskMagazine, Gordie Meyer, P.O. Box 1982, Ames, IA 50010-1982. Phone: (515) 232-1627. Internet: biblinski@delphi.com

Atari Announces New Director of Marketing and Advertising

Terrence Valeski, formerly CEO of Intellivision, and a senior vice president at Mattel in the early 1980s, has joined our favorite computer and consumer electronics company.

Terrence's first job will be to carry out the national roll out of the Jaguar. He has been quoted as saying that consumers should, "expect to see some major shifts in the way Atari markets." Atari also reiterated that Jaguars will be out on the street before Thanksgiving 1993.

Holiday Festival '93

Toad Computers is proud to announce the TOAD COMPUTERS HOLIDAY FESTIVAL '93! Just in time for the Christmas season! On December 4th and 5th, the doors of Toad Computers will open wide for a holiday celebration not to be missed! There will be lots of great deals on Atari hardware, software and accessories, hot apple cider, door prize drawings, and much much more—including the new Atari Jaguar video game system!

Come see the Jaguar in action! We plan to have at least one Jaguar on hand that everyone can play, and possibly even some to sell! For those of you who are unfamiliar with the Jaguar, it is going to be big! Its principal competitor is the 3DO which costs \$700 and has only two or so games right now! The Jaguar, to be released on November 15 in New York, San Francisco and Texas, will have five to ten games and has a retail price of only \$199! The games are under \$50 each! This is why Atari's stock has gone from \$0.50 to \$8 per share in just six months!

I can tell you that I have seen the Jaguar and it is simply stunning. The graphics are only comparable to those of workstations costing \$5,000 and up! You must see it to believe it!

Here are just a few of the attractions planned for the TOAD COMPUTERS HOLIDAY FESTIVAL '93:

- ▶ Great deals on all hardware and software
- ▶ Full selection of Atari hardware & software
- ▶ Atari Falcon030 Computer Systems at Special Discount Prices
- ▶ Super Low Clearance Prices on a wide range of items including discontinued hardware and software, store demo equipment, and much more!
- ▶ Our Toadally Cool Dog, Zoe
- ▶ Seminars By:
 - ✓ Charles Smeton, Developer of STRAIGHT FAX!
 - ✓ Tim Reyes, Developer of Silhouette Colortrace!
 - ✓ Dave Troy, Current Notes Columnist (yours truly)
 - ✓ Joe Waters, Editor of Current Notes
 - ✓ Others To Be Announced!
- ▶ Free Hot Apple Cider (and cookies if you're good!)
- ▶ Special "Kid Korral" with fun stuff, like crayons
- ▶ Dave Small's Own "Live Rust" Neil Young Album, The One To Which Spectre was Programmed!
- ▶ Demos of hardware and software!
- ▶ And of course, HANDS ON WITH THE JAGUAR!

How much would you pay to be a part of a celebration like this? \$3.98? \$14.59? \$75.00 Non Refundable? Well, no need! Admission to the TOAD COMPUTERS HOLIDAY FESTIVAL '93 is ABSOLUTELY FREE!

In the immediate area is historic and scenic Annapolis! Annapolis had been the capitol of the thirteen colonies under the Articles of the Confederation. Its historic state house is

the oldest in use in this country and its white dome was built without the use of nails. Annapolis has a truly quirky personality that is a combination of southern hospitality, northern charm and historic clout. For you military buffs, Annapolis is the home of the United States Naval Academy. It is open to the public and features several museums, exhibits, and historical buildings. Annapolis is also home to some of the best seafood in the world, straight from the Chesapeake Bay. Toad Computers is *10 Minutes* away from downtown Annapolis.

Also nearby is Baltimore, home of the recently renovated and world famous Inner Harbor—a huge shopping and eating area that's just minutes from some of the city's most historic sites. In the inner harbor area, you can visit the National Aquarium (home to thousands of species of marine life) which also features a working rainforest in its pyramid shaped dome. Visit the Maryland Science Center, home to a huge I-MAX theater and also packed with hundreds of constantly changing exhibits that relate to science, computers, and more. Visit the home of Babe Ruth, Betsy Ross, or Edgar Allan Poe. See the new stadium for the Baltimore Orioles—Oriole Park at Camden Yards. You might also want to visit Fort McHenry—the rampart that still stood after a night of bombardment in 1812 that led Francis Scott Key to write our national anthem to the tune of an old drinking song. Find out why this happened! Visit the B&O Railroad Museum where you can learn about the story of the rise and fall of the greatest form of transportation this country has ever known. Toad Computers is *30 Minutes* away from downtown Baltimore.

Lastly, you may want to make a stop in Washington DC—Capitol of the United States. Where else can the mayor of a city smoke crack and still maintain a successful career in politics? Come see the White House—maybe you can visit Bill Clinton at home and give him your ideas for healthcare reform. Visit the Smithsonian Institute, National Art Gallery, countless memorials (Iwo Jima, Viet Nam, Jefferson, Lincoln, Washington Monument), and more. There is more to do in Washington than I could ever begin to list here with any justice. If you do want to go to Washington, check with AAA to make sure that you're not missing anything. It is truly a city with something for everyone. Toad Computers is *45 Minutes* away from downtown Washington.

Hotel Accomodations. If you plan to visit the Annapolis area from out of state, there are several hotels in the area that we may recommend:

Sheraton At BWI Airport, (410) 859-3300. 15 minutes away on Airport grounds.

Loews Annapolis Hotel, 126 West St., Annapolis, MD 21401. (410) 263-777. 15 minutes away Downtown, AAA 4-diamond rating, somewhat expensive.

Days Inn, 1542 Whitehall Road, Annapolis, MD 21401. (410) 974-4440. 10 minutes away next to outlet on US Route 50 near Bay Bridge.

Holiday Inn, 6600 Ritchie Highway, Glen Burnie, MD 21061. (410) 761-8300. 15 minutes away on Ritchie Highway (MD Route 2).

Historic Inns of Annapolis, (There are several), Church Circle, Annapolis, MD 21401. (410) 263-2641. For you lovebirds

who are just dying to have a romantic time in the "ancient city." *15 minutes* away.

We certainly hope that you can join us for what we're sure will be a good time. Jennifer, Ray, Dawn, Alex and I would like to thank you for your continued, sincere support and we look forward to seeing you again or meeting you for the very first time.

As you may know, there was no WAACE show this year, and we think that this show will help to fill the void that was left. WAACE was often called the "Glendale of the East" and as far as Atari shows go, it was truly a class act. I have been peripherally involved in the promotion and the coordination of that show for several years. This show will continue many of the same traditions.

Depending on our needs, we have up to 10,000 square feet of space available for this event (BIG!) along with plenty of free, easy parking right in front of our store.

We will be sending out a large postcard mailing in November in support of this show and we should hear from some more developers that we've invited to the show shortly. Keep your eyes open for more information about other attractions. Obviously, we're going to do whatever we can to make this a successful event.

This will be the third major event held at Toad Computers. The first was the TOAD COMPUTERS MOVING SALE in July 1992. The second was the TOAD COMPUTERS FEST BEFORE THE FEST that immediately preceded the WAACE show last year (and was the first showing of the Falcon 030 after the Boston Computer Society meeting). Both of these events brought in over 200 people and we're confident that this year's event will be at least as successful.

Again, we have made many friends throughout the years here at Toad Computers and we hope to see you all on December 4th and 5th—and not just to do your holiday computer shopping but to stop in and just say "Hi."

Sincerely,
David & Jennifer Troy
Ray Mitchell, Dawn Dineen, Alex Tinsley
Zoe, The Dog

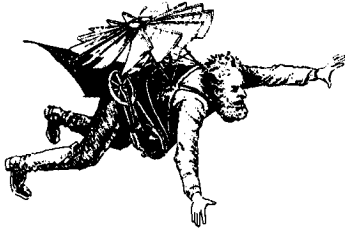
OK! So you're coming! TERRIFIC! Here's everything you need to know:

TOAD Computers Holiday Festival '93

When: Saturday, December 4th 1993 10:00am—7:00pm
Sunday, December 5th 1993 10:00am—5:00pm

Where: Toad Computers
Park Plaza Shopping Center
570-F Ritchie Highway
Severna Park, MD 21146

For More Information Call: Voice (410) 544-6943; FAX (410) 544-1329 FAX; BBS (410) 544-6999. For a map to Toad Computers and the immediate area, see GENie ST Roundtable file #25969 (PostScript) or #25970 (Img Format). Or just call and we'll FAX or mail it to you.



by
**Steven
Kiepe**

It was a dark and stormy night. The wind howled. The dog barked. My master's thesis was coming apart at the seams. Wait, wrong paper! Let's see now, it's time once again for another thrilling installment on the wonderful world of Atari. This month we will bring you . . . the future!

Jaguar Chases Stock Upward

From the amazing world of LaToya Jackson's live psychic line, I was given the latest scoop on Atari's future. The future looks... BRIGHT! The only problem is, there are no computers in it! Atari, always a name that is synonymous with video games, has firmly cemented itself to that banner for the foreseeable future. As a result, Atari stock has continued its dizzying climb from less than a dollar a share early this year to over eight dollars a share by mid-October. The reason for this eight-fold increase in the stock value . . . a video gaming system called *Jaguar*. It appears that Atari has discovered a real winner here and that this time, so it is hoped, it will be able to take advantage of the limelight and make large inroads into its chosen market.

Yes, I know this column is supposed to be about the Atari ST family of computers. The problem is, information along those lines is really scarce. When Sam Tramiel announced that Atari's goal was to have 80% of all 1994 sales come from the *Jaguar* (and probably most of the rest from the Lynx) there is little room for the computer market. It's true, the *Jaguar* is a phenomenal machine and is actually making real appearances on national TV and in print. This shift in emphasis appears to be a sound financial move on the part of Atari; certainly the financial markets are showing a lot of interest in that regard.

Developers Backoff Atari Support

In the meantime, more developers have stated their intent to hold back from further development for Atari computers, noting that Falcon sales have not been sufficient to justify further expenditures or effort. Most recent to post that decision was David Beckemeyer of Beckemeyer Development, developer of *Hard Disk Sentry*. At the same time, Soft Logik has again iterated that its decision on developing *PageStream* v3.0 for the Atari is not final, but that the market is simply not developing as hoped for.

Atari (Jaguar) Stock Up, The Costs of Switching, Atari Dealers

No Sign of TT Return Yet

The long awaited return of the TT announced by Atari spokesman Bob Brodie in his May GENIE RTC has yet to occur. There are no clues as to when this "higher end" machine will make its reappearance in the States. Granted, virtually the entire focus of Atari is on the Jaguar, and to ensure the company's survival this is probably appropriate. Even so, every day that passes without there being product available for waiting customers results in another user lost to more "main-stream," but responsive, computer companies.

The Hidden Costs of Switching

Before you turn in your Atari ST/TT/Falcon for brand X, be advised that there are a tremendous number of disadvantages and hidden costs in doing so. I was forced, by work concerns, to finally break down and purchase a portable computer that I could lug back and forth on a near daily basis. I tried almost heroically to hold out for a new ST Book of some sort, but such a product is not likely to appear until far in the future, if at all. Used Stacy's are at a premium; the very few 4 MB Ram 40MB Hard Drive systems I found in several months' of searching were being offered right around \$1,400. I considered that price ludicrous when I could buy a 33 MHZ 68030 based Macintosh Powerbook 165/165c with 4 MB of RAM, 80 MB hard drive, 10 inch 16 level greyscale or COLOR (passive matrix) screen for less than \$1,800 new. I was finally overcome and forked over the cash. Now that I have this new powerhouse, what is my system of choice? It's still my Atari!

Believe it or not, my T-25 accelerated Atari seems *faster* than the speedster Powerbook, at least in those functions I use most, such as word processing. Further, even though I'm a Spectre GCR owner and am reasonably Macintosh literate, it is an environment that still takes getting used to. The 4MB of Macintosh RAM is really only 2.7 MB after you load in the required operating system and extensions, and that's on a stripped down system. The Macintosh is a very hard disk-intensive machine, which really slows down the system, or at least it will until I can add several more megs of memory to it and set up a RAM disk!

Let's see now, with 85ns laptop memory at around \$375 for 4 more megs, and for the Macintosh version of my word processing software, an integrated package to get low-cost spreadsheet and database capabil-

ity, a few utilities to translate DOS and Atari documents to Mac format, some special cables to hook my Powerbook to my printer and modem . . . around \$3,000 out the door and that's without any "nice-to-have" options!

If I had gone the *MS DOS* route, it wouldn't have been much cheaper (at least not the portable route). In short, if you switch, you will end up shelling out some major bucks! Be honest with yourself right up front. Is the return on your money really worth it? For me, the answer was yes but that doesn't mean my Atari has gone out the door. Quite the contrary, I've developed a new appreciation for the truly remarkable interface and capability of these machines designed nearly a decade ago.

More Atari Creativity

This month I have the good fortune to bring you another story of the creative users of Atari computers. At the same time, several new leads have crossed my desk and are working their way toward print. It would appear that there are a lot of ingenious, dedicated, and just plain creative folks out there who are milking far more performance out of their computers than most people would have thought possible. I invite you to take a look at this continuing series of articles and consider that for many folks, your current Atari computer has far more capability than you could ever use. It's true for me (just not very luggable is all!).

Atari Dealer List

Also, we are publishing our initial list of North American Atari dealerships in this issue. Please help us out by forwarding the name, address, and phone number as well as any other pertinent dealer information to me, care of *Current Notes*. Let's get the word out and try to unite a few of our lost brethren with a good support network. See you next month!

ATY Computer, 3727 13th Ave, Oakland, CA 94610. (510) 482-3775

B&C Computervisions, 2730 Scott Blvd, Santa Clara, CA 95050. (408) 986-9960.

Computer Discoveries, 12801 Midway Rd, Dallas, TX 75244. (214) 484-9104.

The Computer Network, 1605 W. Glenoaks Blvd, Glendale, CA 91201. Voice 818-500-3900; Fax 818-500-0751.

Computer Studio. Westgate Shopping Center. Asheville, NC 28806. (704) 251-0201.

Computer Zone, 28 E. Washington St., N. Attleboro, MA 02760. (508) 699-0430.

Compuworld, 4800 Sheppard Ave East, Unit 105, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1S 4N5. Phone/fax (416) 299-8191; for repairs: **HighTron**, same address, but phone 299-8782.

D&P Computer, P.O. Box 811, Elyria, OH 44036. Orders (800) 535-4290; Tech & Fax (216) 926-3842.

DEMAND SYSTEMS, Camarillo, CA (address and phone unknown.)

The Digital Centre, 920 Commissioners Rd E, London, Ontario N5Z 3J1 Canada. (519) 681-2728.

East Hartford Computer Repair, 202 Roberts St, E. Hartford, CT 06108. (203) 528-4448.

The Electronic Clinic, 4916 Del-Ray Ave, Bethesda, MD 20814. (301) 656-7983.

Falcon Systems (formerly Quay Computers), 615 8th St (upstairs), New Westminster, B.C. Canada (604) 522-2915.

FAR Electronics, 2134 Warrior Rd, Birmingham, AL 35208 (205) 785-4192.

Far North Computers, 59 College Rd, Fairbanks, AK 99701. (907) 456-3700.

Guitar Center, 14080 Dallas Pkwy, Dallas, TX 75240. (214) 960-0011.

Guitar Center, 721 Ryan Plaza Dr, Arlington, TX 76011. (817) 277-3510.

HobbyTown, 220 N. 66th St, Lincoln, NE 68505. (402) 434-5056.

Horizon Computers, 695 S. Colorado Blvd, #10, Denver, CO 80222. (303) 777-8080.

I.B. Computers, 9244 SW Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy, Beaverton, OR 97005. (503) 297-8425.

L&Y Electronics, 13644C Jefferson Davis Hwy, Woodbridge, VA 22191. (703) 494-3444; (703) 643-1729; Fax (703) 494-3663.

MegaByte Computers of N. TX., 909 Melbourne Rd, Ft. Worth, TX 76117. (817) 589-2950.

Micro Computer Depot, 741 Bultman Dr, Sumter, SC 29150. (803) 775-5165; 1-800-845-3070 (orders only); (803) 778-2010 (24 hr. Fax order line.)

Mid-Cities Computers and Software, 9406 Flower St, Bellflower, CA 90706. (310) 867-0626.

Neutronics, 3323C Orlando Pl, Honolulu, HI 96818. Phone/Fax (808) 423-0122.

New Dimensions Computer Center, 9026 W. National Ave, West Allis, WI 53227. Phone/Fax (414) 327-3311.

POWER Computers, 41811 Garfield, Clinton Township, MI 48038. (313) 228-5400.

Replay Entertainment, Toronto, Ontario, Canada (address and phone unknown.)

Rising Star Computers and Repair, P.O. Box 20036, Dayton, OH 45420. Orders (800) 252-2787; Info (513) 254-3160.

RGB Data Consultants, 14 Citadel Ct, Eastern Passage, N.S. Canada B3G-1C5 Voice: (902) 465-5068; BBS:(902)465-2321; Fax (902) 497-2321.

RUN PC, 524 W. Laurel, FT Collins, CO 80521. (800) 326-2344; (303) 493-5565.

SoftHouse Computer Center, 32647 Ford Rd., Garden City, MI 48135 Phone: (313) 422 6760

Spectrum Software, North Plainfield, NJ (908) 561-8777

Toad Computers, 570-F Ritchie Hwy, Severna Park, MD 21146. Orders (800) 448-8623; Info (410) 544-6943; Fax (410) 544-1329; BBS (410) 544-6999.

Wizard Computer Systems, 6082 Fraser St, Vancouver, B.C. V5W 2Z7 Canada



To Show or Not To Show

(C) 1993 David C. Troy

Hi

This month I don't really have anything special on the old agenda, so we'll just take some time and talk about a bunch of stuff. I've got stories about the WAACE show, about stock prices, and more.

WAACE '93

About two weeks ago I found myself strangely missing something—something that went with the time of year, the color of the leaves, the temper of the air. Then it struck me. For every Columbus day weekend since 1985 I had been at the WAACE AtariFest, until this year. This year I stayed home, worked in the basement, went rollerblading, and attended a wedding. All fine activities, of course, but they weren't the WAACE show.

The wedding helped make up for it to some extent—at least I was eating whimsically prepared banquet food in a hotel ballroom. And the guy who got married is a long time friend and customer, Duane Keenan. He's got a TT030 with the big monitor and everything. The wedding program was made with *PageStream*. Duane had helped us out at WAACE shows for the past few years. He picked up Dave Small at the airport for us last year. So to a certain extent, because of the parity of its components, his wedding *was* WAACE '93 for me.

Other things happened that weekend. As I am sure you know by now, my longtime friend and former ST editor here at CN, Frank Sommers, passed away. It seems really unusual that this should happen on this weekend. If things had continued as before, Frank would have been at the show, God willing, being his usual congenial self and getting into mischief. But, alas, it was not to be.

After the weekend had come and passed, with nary a mention of the WAACE show from anyone in the press, I began to realize that I was probably one of the few people who was qualified to tell the story of what happened to this year's WAACE show.

It takes about a year to put together a show as big as the WAACE AtariFest. The organizers of Glendale and other shows will undoubtedly agree with this. Well, for every year for the past several years, steadfast souls like John Barnes, Charles Smeton, Steve Rigby, Ken Fassler, Betty Burchell, and many

others (myself included) began planning for the next WAACE show about a month after that year's show. And it is a LOT of work.

Well, immediately following the '92 show, it certainly had not been decided that there would be no WAACE '93, but the planning would have to be started at some point. And it was quite unclear as to who was going to do this planning.

It would be naive to say that politics played no role in the WAACE machinery, but I would be irresponsible to lay out all of the details—because it is an essentially moot point anyway. But to make a long story very short, there were those within the WAACE planning circle who felt that Atari should always have offered more support to the show. There were what amounted to personality conflicts between certain folks at Atari and folks within WAACE that prevented more support from coming from Sunnyvale.

This friction, combined with the realistic sensation that the WAACE show was a lot of work for a lot of people who had been doing it for a long time, meant that many of the folks who had traditionally carried much of the weight of the show were really, really tired. So it remained: if there was to be a show, it became clear towards the end of 1992 that it would have to be planned by someone other than the usual crew.

Just knowing that the fate of the show was undecided and could essentially go either way caused me to do a lot of thinking last January and February. I began to think that if there was to be a show, I would have to be the one to set the ball in motion. There were still folks who would volunteer to help at an event like this (many of our customers, like Duane, as well as user group volunteers, etc). There was no real reason why the show couldn't go on as it always had. It would just require planning and it had to start before it got too late. The clock kept ticking.

For those of you who don't know me real well, I am a relatively busy person. I do a heck of a lot of the background stuff here at Tbad Computers (marketing, programming the point of sale system, setting up the network, designing new products and getting them produced, ordering, worrying about STraight FAX, getting products from overseas). Sometimes, like this fall for instance, I try to fit in a few classes at Johns

Hopkins. I also do advertising and programming for Tbad Music (our music store). We had recently started a wholesale division of Tbad Computers, Eastern Front. That needed some attention, and when I'm not doing that stuff, I'm writing *Current Notes* articles, making catalogs, asleep or eating. Oh yeah, sometimes I have Sundays off, when Jennifer and I try to relax.

So anyway, casually "fitting in" the planning for the WAACE show was not something I felt I could realistically do if it was to be done at all right. I knew what had to be done, I knew the right people to talk to, and I knew just how much work it was. For precisely this reason I was incredibly wary about making any commitment to it whatsoever. But I continued to lose sleep over it, trying to figure out what could be done to make it work.

I then did what many people do when they have a nagging problem—I told my mother about it to see if she had any ideas about how to make this work. That probably sounds a little weird. Most women, not to mention mothers, don't really care about computers and care less about computer *shows*. Well, my mom is different. She doesn't care about computers (despite the fact that she's a longtime Mega ST user). She does, however, care about shows. She owns a media company that does stuff like that, so consulting her about the dilemma was actually a very professional maneuver.

We attacked the idea from every angle. We philosophically ripped the idea of a WAACE show apart until we had a real idea of its essence. We tried to identify its major strengths and weaknesses, we added and subtracted components, we transposed it to several different possible locations, and generally, that night, Jennifer, Mom, the dog and I completely reinvented, or at least rebuilt without any dead wood, the WAACE show.

We considered possibilities like conning (somehow) one or more famous Atari-using personalities to come to the show. Like the Neville Brothers, Mick Fleetwood, Jimmy Hotz, or Prince. Believe it or not, although these all sound like real long shots, all these folks use Atari's, and we actually know how to get in touch with these people. If it were possible to get this level of person to attend a show, it is not unrealistic to think that people would go to the show just to see them, possibly boosting attendance to well over five thousand people. We could even *pay* these people to come.

Mick Fleetwood was a particularly strong candidate as he was featured at the World of Atari Show in Anaheim in '89, where I met him. He also is big in the Washington area here (especially at that time), as Fleetwood Mac had just finished playing at Bill Clinton's inauguration. Perhaps Bill would come to the show, too, and we could sample his sax playing. (We

wouldn't have to save it on the hard drive after he left.)

Some of you are skeptics and are saying that this whole idea sounds completely ridiculous, but wouldn't you have been red faced if it had worked? I'll grant that it always pays to be cautiously realistic, but if you limit yourself to small ideas, you'll always get small results.

Mom was actually willing to have her company take on the production of the show. WAACE has always made money on the show, and it has been on the order of at least a couple of thousand dollars. This was incentive enough to cause mom to be interested. Now we had to determine whether our reinvented show could really work—and make enough money to make it worth her time.

By then it was late March, and it was clear that planning would have to be especially speedy if we were to make up for lost time. So we got on the phone and talked to a lot of folks. We talked to friends at Atari. We talked to Dave Small. We talked to folks within WAACE. We talked to hotels, including the Reston Sheraton where the show has always been. We talked to the people that manage our shopping center. We talked to national guard armories. In general, we felt that it could work, although it was a longshot.

The only thing that had yet to be resolved before we could begin planning was what to *call* the show. I couldn't, in good conscience, plan it for Columbus day weekend, because Duane had already told me that his wedding was on October 9th, and it would crush him to have to miss the show. (Friends are friends, right?) So another date, probably the following weekend, would have to be used instead.

We had so tinkered with the basic concept of the show, and even the date, that we weren't sure if we should even *try* to call it **WAACE AtariFest '93**. At the same time, we felt that the WAACE name would be helpful in letting people know that it was born of the same inspiration as always. Hmmm. Well, it would be easy **not** to call it WAACE '93, because that would require no effort. But it would be nice if we could say that it was endorsed by WAACE.

We wanted to announce the show in the first week of April at the latest, because that would give everybody six months notice. When it came time to put this thing to the test, we told the folks within WAACE that we were ready to go ahead with our plans, and we wanted their support. This is where we encountered some pretty wishy-washy stuff.

It wasn't that they didn't want to endorse our concept, really. In fact, the content of our show was really irrelevant to them. What it came down to was a matter of possession. For those of you who don't know about WAACE (Washington Area Atari Computer Enthusiasts) and the way it is set up, it is a federation of Atari user groups. Way back around the myocene geo-

logical epoch, when there were a lot of Atari user groups around here, it was actually beneficial to have a larger umbrella organization for these smaller groups that could administer a newsletter (which is what *Current Notes* was at that time), put on shows, run a BBS (Armudic), and generally do things above and beyond what these satellite groups were capable of doing.

WAACE is actually an incorporated non-profit entity now, and its function as an umbrella organization for user groups is essentially done with. WAACE's member groups have all either significantly atrophied or dissolved entirely, so the remainder of the folks with any real interest in WAACE was small. John Barnes was out of the picture. Charles Smeton was busy developing *STraight FAX* (in addition to his job as an EE). *Current Notes* had become independent of WAACE many, many years ago. There were really just a few people left who could give an endorsement of anything on WAACE's behalf.

Apparently, the main objection, as I said, was that of possession. They did not want to pass on the WAACE name to anyone without taking a lot of time to stop and consider it from many angles. Okay, that's their right. But here's the deal: if there was to be a show, it needed to be announced right away. There was no time for deliberation and political discussion. Apparently, there was some concern that the show would be run on a for-profit basis by my mother's company. Well, the deal is that unless they knew of another nonprofit group that was going to do it, it would have to be done by someone expecting at least some, however meager, financial reward. We would not have pursued this thing at all if at any time there was ever any sign of any action on the part of WAACE.

I am sad to report that there was no real interest in doing the show left within WAACE—to the extent that they would rather have no show than a show that wasn't entirely theirs. And I just didn't care about the possession of this thing. I felt that it was necessary to take action if there was to be a show. I did. No one at WAACE cared if there was a show or not, so mom and I decided to say the heck with it. I am a pretty persuasive guy, and am willing to talk through a lot of issues to get things done, but I am not willing to play silly games with a few people who essentially want to be looked upon as martyrs. I just don't have the time.

Even without WAACE's endorsement, there remained the possibility that a show could exist without it. But we were rightly discouraged by this kind of political pettiness. If WAACE was really that hell-bent on not having a show, why should we even try? The final blow was that WAACE could not guarantee us that they were NOT going to do a show, even if it was as small as a regional swap meet. So essentially, they wouldn't agree not to try to sponsor a competing

event. Granted, this too is their right, but simply reserving rights will never get anything done.

Putting on a show is a major monetary risk, especially if it is done at a hotel, and we just didn't want to take the risk. Risk taking requires 100% inspiration and 200% perspiration, and we were left with no inspiration at all after our slow, slow, slow talks with WAACE. So we decided to let it rest. We were in no mood to perspire without some help.

So the months passed quickly as usual, and here we are in October, (or November by the time you read this), and golly, I'm really surprised that there was no WAACE show. (Ugh.) No nothing. Not a peep. Not even a swap meet.

Holiday Festival '93

Around August, Jennifer and I began to entertain the idea of putting on a show here, similar to what we did in October of '92 for our "Fest Before the Fest." In all of our talking with people, we discovered that our shopping center would let us lease the huge 5,500 square foot empty storefront (combine this with our 4,000 sf store and you've got a space bigger than any Atari show held in this country) next to us for a week-end. For free. However, this would require that the space not be rented out at that time. So, we were in a bit of a bind. We couldn't really announce a huge show, counting on that space, and then discover six months later when the show was to take place that the space we had counted on was gone and rented by "Pet Toys R Us" or something.

So as time marched on, we felt we should still do something but we were unsure what or when. So we announced, a couple of days ago, what we're calling the "Toad Computers Holiday Festival '93." It will be essentially a show like those we have had here at the store before. I feel 99% certain that we will have a Jaguar here for this show, if not a few to sell, so that should be fun for everyone. I've said it before but I'll say it again: **Jaguar graphics are beyond belief.** You will be impressed. It hooks up to anything that uses a 15.75KHz horizontal scan rate—i.e. a TV or ST color monitor (like the SC1224). The graphics I have seen are non-interlaced and look simply amazing.

So anyway, "Holiday Festival '93" will take place on December 4th and 5th (Saturday and Sunday) here at our store and we hope you all can make it—to come by and see the Jaguar and generally visit the area. Annapolis, Baltimore and Washington are all nearby and are full of fun things to do and see. We'll have all sorts of good stuff for sale cheap, and we're talking to some of our developer friends. We'll be doing *STraight FAX 2.0* upgrades, *Silhouette* upgrades (crossing fingers), and there is a possibility that Dave Small will come out to do *Spectre 3.1* upgrades. He and Sandy are trying to decide if they can make it out here. Joe

Waters has even agreed to do a seminar about CN. And there will be other seminars, too. There's a file on the GENie ST Roundtable (TOADSHOWZIP) that describes the whole thing more clearly.

And, I almost forgot, we'll have free hot apple cider and you'll get to meet the dog. The show should be relatively laid-back and relaxed, but if history doesn't deceive us, we should have a couple of hundred folks at least. Come do your holiday shopping—but don't feel compelled to leave that special computer user in your life home just so you can buy gifts—bring him along and we promise we won't tell him what you bought for him. We look forward to seeing you all.

What's Up?

Atari stock—that's what. Who the heck would have thought that it would ever recover from its fifty-cent days? Atari's common stock (ATC / Atari on the American Stock Exchange) closed at \$8.00 per share yesterday (October 20). It was as high as \$10.00 a few days ago and was the second most-traded stock on the exchange that day. It seems to be inching up, slowly but surely. What is causing all the uproar?

Apparently, investors are beginning to think that Atari may really be holding some piece of the interactive video game CD-ROM cable TV telephone fiber-optic ATM puzzle, and they're putting their money where their mouths are. The Jaguar at \$200 is a far cry from the \$700 3DO consoles, and as I said last month, it's fast as heck and the graphics are unbelievable.

3DO does have the advantage of trying to be a standard, and it means that more than one company will have interest in its success. 3DO has several Japanese manufacturers (Matsushita / Panasonic, Samsung, and the like) lined up to make 3DO consoles. If you compare the relative size of the 3DO operation, including the sizes of all of its investor and contracted companies, it forms a money well of absolutely astonishing proportions. Needless to say, this well is deeper than Atari's \$40 or \$50 million in cash, and they could easily outspend Atari at any time.

And Atari does have this tendency **not** to spend enough on promoting products. We'll see what happens.

But you may forget that Time-Warner owns 25% of Atari Corporation, and a large part of this whole battle revolves around an alliance with a cable TV or telephone company (soon you will not be able to tell the difference between these two—they will come into your house on one common spigot from one carrier). The speed and power of the Jaguar (and 3DO) make them perfect cultures for growing things like interactive TV, home shopping, computer networks, you name it—it can be done with a fast network hooked up to a fast computer like a Jaguar or 3DO. At any rate,

Time-Warner owns a large chunk of this country's cable TV business. They would obviously like to see Atari succeed and if the alliances continue between Time Warner and Atari as they have (Atari has already licensed video clips and Tiny Toon characters for use in games), they could become the defacto standard for video game / interactive TV technology for the next five years at least.

I rather suspect that it is this line of reasoning that has sent Atari stock through the roof. In a conversation yesterday with Atari's director of communications, Bob Brodie, I asked him why the price had jumped so dramatically last week (the first jump, from \$1 to \$4.50 came in July after Atari announced that IBM would be building the Jaguar). He said that he had asked Sam Tramiel (the president of Atari) the same question. Sam laughed and wittily replied that there were "more buyers than sellers." Good point. I wonder if this rule applies to other stock issues?

Bob said that Sam stole that from Jack, though, so we'll have to give the credit to Jack for that observation.

I bought my Atari stock in 1986 at a price that compares to about \$6.50 on this current scale. I honestly can't decide if I should sell it or hang onto it and take the big gamble. If I sold it now, I could actually clear a few dollars on it. But will I regret it in March '94? I dunno.

Frank Sommers

Frank Sommers was a kind and honest man and always treated me with respect. For this reason, I have always respected him and I will miss him. I have known Frank for about five years. He's been a customer, a colleague here at CN, and a friend. The way Frank talked, I was *sure* he would live longer than Atari ever would.

Whenever we can, when a new issue of *Current Notes* comes in from the printer in Iowa, us CN folks in the Washington area try to get together for a little luncheon—to look at the new issue and to just chat. I have been only to about a half dozen of these, mostly because they're usually held somewhere in the surburbaon Washington area, at least 75 minutes away from the store. I sometimes cannot get away for the four hours that these things always seem to warrant.

All of the CN luncheons I have been to have been at Frank Sommers' house. I have never felt so welcome in any other man's home. Frank always had good food, good drink, stimulating conversation and was always a good host. When you get guys like Joe Waters, John Barnes, Don Elmore, Richard Gunter, Andrzej Wrotniak, Mike Heining and others all together at Frank Sommers house, you can be assured of an interesting conversation—one that often turns more to

politics than to Atari. Frank always took a decidedly leftist approach to things. It was a good contrast. Frank was good friends with Nina Totenberg, the NPR reporter who broke the Anita Hill / Clarence Thomas story. Frank knew lots of people and his political views were justified primarily by experience. That commands respect.

It's just plain weird that Frank should have died on Columbus Day weekend. We all owe him some thanks for serving CN for so many years. Even for all of his skepticism, he did a good, respectable job.

One Columbus Day weekend, two years ago, at the WAACE show banquet where I was lucky enough to be presented with the CN Author of the Year award, Frank was introducing me. He made a mistake and proclaimed that my partner, Ray Mitchell, was really named Mark Carver (owner of Joppa Computer Products). Now Ray has always been a behind the scenes kinda guy. But let me tell you, that mistake brought down the house with laughter (second only to the Dave Small foodfight), and though Frank sometimes made mistakes like that, I couldn't help but forgive him immediately. It was an honest mistake.

Frank went through a tough time about a year ago when he lost his wife. Shortly after though, he rediscovered an old family friend whose husband had

passed away some years ago and plans for a new marriage were set. I was so happy to hear about that. A lot of retired men, after losing their wives, retreat back into a kind of a stupor. Frank did no such thing. He was determined to participate in life, despite its challenges. That should serve as a model for us all.

In losing Frank Sommers, we all lose a dear friend and a valuable contributor to *Current Notes*.
Hats Off, Frank Sommers!

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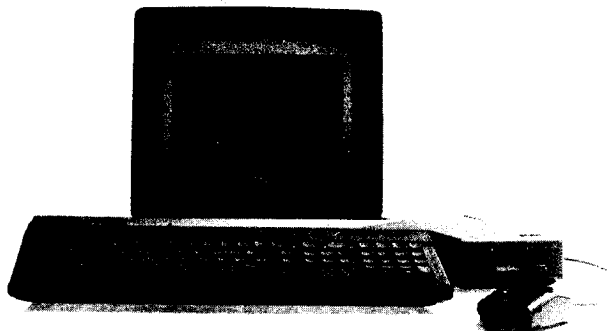
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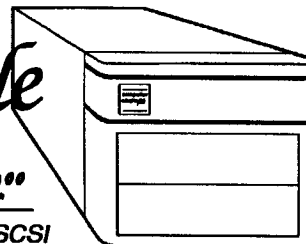
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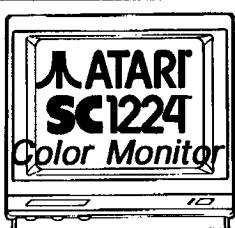
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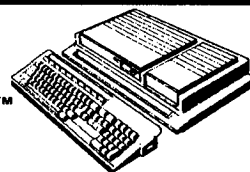
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An Atari Computer to Fix Your Airplane?

As we've seen in previous columns, Atari ST computers are used commercially across a wide spectrum of industry, including the design of manufactured equipment, maintenance of industrial inventory records, providing small business support, operating embroidery machines, and other innovative yet "benign" uses. Suppose I told you that trusty Atari computers are used to test and aid in the repair of aircraft avionics systems, electronic components, which are critical to ensuring that private and commercial aircraft can safely navigate and communicate their way across the United States and around the world. Would that add a new perspective to your views about this "toy" computer? Are you going to change to Amtrak vice riding in the friendly skies? Fear not, there is no cause for alarm. Stick around a bit and we'll tell you a story of innovation and utility. Our business of interest for this month's column is **Duncan Aviation** of Lincoln, Nebraska.

Aircraft Servicing by Specialists

All aircraft have several common characteristics which include at least two pertinent to our article. First of all, sooner or later something will break down and need repair. That characteristic is followed closely by a second, i.e., you don't just go down to Jim's auto repair and have your neighborhood mechanic grub around under the hood in an attempt to fix it. The specialists that provide much of the care for the nation's corporate and private civil aircraft operate out of companies called Fixed Base Operators (FBO).

There is usually at least one FBO at every airport of significant size and these businesses provide most necessary aircraft service including fueling,

washing, structural repair, avionics repair, engine overhaul, and other required systems upkeep. This is not a job for "Billy Ray Bob" who tinkered with his dad's car or lawnmower while he was growing up; this is a deadly serious business staffed by professionals. Many of these technicians require years of intensive training and are licensed and certified by the FAA and other government regulators.

Duncan Aviation is one of the largest FBOs in the United States and employs approximately 600 employees at its main offices and in and several satellite shops scattered around the nation. They service everything from small private aircraft through corporate jets and airline fleets.

One of their specialties is avionics test and repair. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the term, avionics is a compressed term derived from AViation electRONICS. Avionics equipment includes items such as: transponders, which tell air traffic controllers your aircraft identification, altitude, and enhance the air traffic controller's radar display (much improved over ordinary radar blips); communications equipment, which covers the full radio spectrum for voice and data transmission; radar for airtraffic avoidance and inclement weather avoidance; navigation systems to ensure that the aircraft can find its way from one location to another; and approach aids, which help the pilot land the aircraft in bad weather and near zero visibility.

Although Duncan Aviation may be an exceptional FBO in terms of overall aircraft servicing and the scale of operations, it is in avionics that they truly stand out. *Professional Pilot* magazine has rated Duncan as the **number ONE rated FBO in avionics accessories for eight years running!** What is even more

remarkable is that to a significant degree, their success in this area stems from their use of Atari computers.

It's All in the Test Benches

The heart of an avionics repair facility is its test benches. In most establishments this consists of a large selection of avionics equipment specific, expensive and complicated test stands, which allow skilled technicians to isolate problems and rapidly rectify them.

Duncan Aviation's research division had a better idea. Ed Gilmore, Don Reeves and Rich Teel cooperatively developed a computer controlled avionics test system using Atari computers. They started with one megabyte Atari 520 and 1040 ST's, authored a specialized software package using the "C" programming language, and interfaced the computer system with a custom-designed multi-purpose avionics test set. The computer/test set tie-in is via the RS-232 serial port, packaged it in such a way that the technicians could interface with it as if it was an industry standard test set vice a personal computer. Their success was so profound that the Atari-based "softset" can accomplish more tasking at smaller cost and space requirements than virtually any test bench on the market.

Simulation Is Job #1

Duncan Aviation's avionics test-bench setup consists of the Atari STs with a single floppy drive, display and controls in a 19-inch rack mount with sliding shelves. It is mated to radio frequency generators to simulate ground-based navigation and communication signals, air sources to "simulate" the pressure and vacuum effects of airspeed and altitude, and similar test-supporting equipment. The technician need only start the Atari cus-

tomized test bench, interact with the equipment under test via Atari's graphical user interface, and use the mouse to mimic operating a switch, tuning radios, etc. All necessary conditions are then simulated by the various pieces of test equipment. The avionics equipment's performance can then be analyzed and corrected as necessary. A single custom bench allows testing of 50 to 60 different types of avionics units, which ordinarily would have required their own individual test equipment. The combination of low cost, high-flexibility, and ease of use makes this an ideal setup, especially in those areas where operation of a more extensive series of test benches would be prohibited. Duncan Aviation's "satellite" shops have the advantage of commonality of equipment with the main FBO without sacrificing capability in spite of the small scale of their individual operations.

To give an example of the extent to which the customized Atari test benches are used at Duncan Aviation, consider that the avionics division processes more than two thousand avionics components *per month*. Although economic conditions have had adverse consequences for the aviation industry in general, Duncan Aviation continues to set the standard by which all other FBO's are measured. The more than 30 Atari test benches coupled to their "software programmable test sets" is one of the reasons that Duncan Aviation has been so successful in the avionics test and repair field.

Local Support for Atari Computers

Duncan Aviation has been doubly fortunate in having both a good run of performance and reliability in its Atari computers and in having a local Atari service technician, Robert Patton of P.E.E.R.S. in Omaha. Additionally, the simplicity of use of the Atari interface and the fact that only a basic computer system is required (no hard drives, modems, or other external components) reduces the complexity (and therefore vulnerability) of the entire system. The avionics technicians

are pleased with not having to spend their time working within the constraint of MS DOS command line constraints, instead being able to interface with the softset in a "comfortable" working environment. This reduces training, minimizes mistakes that might otherwise occur while becoming familiar with the test equipment, and increases overall productivity. Finally, although Ed lives in Wyoming and, hence, is not the full time Atari resident expert, the other members of the research group are equally committed to ensuring that the Atari benches are operating as designed.

Atari's Lost Opportunity

It sounds like great news for Atari computers, right? Well, there is a down side here as well. Because Atari never really caught on in the business world, except for specialized applications, virtually every other function of Duncan Aviation is conducted using MS-DOS and Macintosh-based computers. Duncan Aviation has pretty much lost track of the Atari world in the last few years and will likely be moving to MS-DOS based systems for future test benches. The ready availability and low cost of IBM "clone" motherboards and components lend themselves to future development of more "open" systems. Atari's failure to provide product in a timely manner and to update their products on a regular basis greatly concerns Duncan's management. They have lost faith in Atari management and marketing and were greatly dissuaded from further Atari purchases due to the lack of ready access to development tools at reasonable cost. They had need of higher resolution color displays in stock Atari machines and when this was not forthcoming (until the arrival of the Falcon) management directed the pursuit of a non-Atari alternative. Duncan Aviation has been most happy with Atari the computer system, and most displeased with Atari the corporate entity. They have noted tremendous reliability in their Atari computers over the last seven years and are only now starting to see significant levels of malfunction but that is to be

expected after so many years of constant use.

This article demonstrates, once again, how Atari's exceptionally well-designed computer system, in the right hands, has the power to compete head to head with any system on the market. However, the continued failure of Atari Corporation to make headway in the corporate world, the home market, or any other major market (save music) cannot be blamed on design flaws or a lack of ingenuity on the part of its creators. The user base has "pushed the envelope" of hardware and software implementation only to flounder on the rocks of corporate Atari's problems in product availability, dealer base, developer support, and marketing. Nevertheless, there is a lot of life left in those ST's so don't be so fast to relegate them to the "old-PC" home. Take another look at the potential gold mine on your desk and realize that the biggest limitation on your computer's capabilities is you!

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Atari in the STicks

Henry K. van Eyken

Teradesk at Tuxedo Junction

Doing It Up Brown with Public-Domain Programs

Credit the late George Gobel for this one: Feeling like a pair of brown shoes with a tux. That's how, on occasion, it feels to enter the pages of *Current Notes* without even so much as owning a harddisk. Just to make matters worse, I have come to this month's party with an alternative desktop from the public domain, and that in a day and age when the buzz among true computati is about avant-garde stuff like PowerOpen architecture and *Geneva* multitasking! So, if you, too, are still without a harddisk, why not join us in that cozy corner behind the potted palms? And if you do own one, well, maybe you'll enjoy a Miller Light and, who knows, profit from listening in. Or, let us benefit from your experience.

Teradesk

Teradesk, by Wout Klaren of The Netherlands, is a delightful and capable partner that may be downloaded from GENie and should also be available from many PD and user-group libraries.¹ Like all alternative desktops, it was written for people with a harddisk, its primary trait being automated program launching by, either clicking on one of a fine crop of icons, or double-clicking on an associated file. But quite contrary to custom, Figure 1 shows a desktop lay-out for a system without a harddisk. The caption summarizes its main features. Notice that a click on the icon *Run Main Pgm* starts

¹W. Klaren, *Teradesk v.1.32*. GENie ST Lib. 28849:

TERA_132.ZIP (TT version: 28811: TERA0232.ZIP). Another alternate desktop (shareware): G. Steffens and S. Eissing, *Gemini*. GENie ST Lib. 18596: GEMINI12.LZH or 25078: GMNI121E.Z00. These files require about 1.5 MB after extraction.

the program designated as *main* on whatever floppy disk is in Drive A. Thus, a single icon takes the place of a whole slew of icons ordinarily found on the desktop of harddrive users, a clutter that may readily interfere with desktop space allocation to menu windows. Clicking on another icon, *Copy A to C*, copies a set of preselected files to a spacious RAM disk for rapid program and files management.

There are more reasons for using *Teradesk*, some of which quite compelling:

★ One may—without fuss—store alternate desktop lay-outs for immediate recall with a mouse click or two. Not only desktop arrangements best suited to a particular screen resolution, but also more than one lay-out for any one resolution (Figure 2). Thus one may bring up, without a reboot, a stored desktop best suited to a particular session.

★ Besides allowing one to display items on the disk menus sorted by name, extension, date, or size, one may instead elect to show them *unsorted*, that is to say, to show them in the order they were put on disk. This is especially handy for reconstructing the sequence in which programs were placed in the auto folder, a sequence that may affect how well the computer behaves.

★ The size and place of a menu window may be toggled between normal display and full-screen display by clicking on the "full" box at its right-top corner. Besides that, the menu windows have horizontal sliders as well as the vertical ones so that resizing is not really required for reading a complete file entry.

★ One may choose a smaller print for the disk menus so that one may see more menu entries at a glance and, hence,

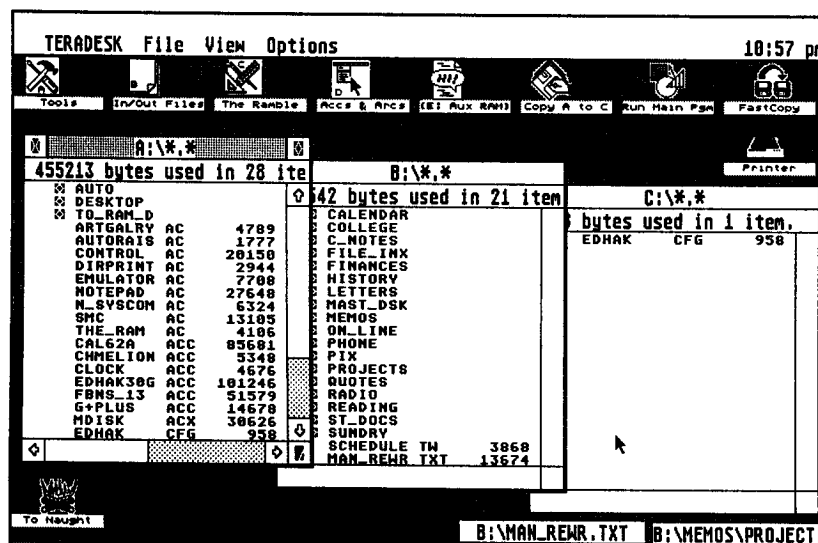


Figure 1—Silver bells, and cockle shells, and pretty maidens all in a row. Teradesk in hi-res on a 4-meg STE with two floppy drives just after boot-up. The top-row icons represent (l. to r.): internal drive (A), external drive (B), a 1.5-meg RAM disk for current work (C), a small RAM disk with utilities on tap (D), a latent RAM disk (E) that may be created and sized with *Chameleon*, a hot icon for copying a set of files from drive A to C, a hot icon for starting a preselected application on whatever disk is in Drive A, and a hot icon for starting Backschat's *FastCopy-3* from RAM disk D. Staggered menu windows permit rapid file copying or transfers without any need for resizing them. As for those menu bars at the bottom: click on their "full" boxes and up pop documents that may have been left there from a previous session, with their sliders just where they were.

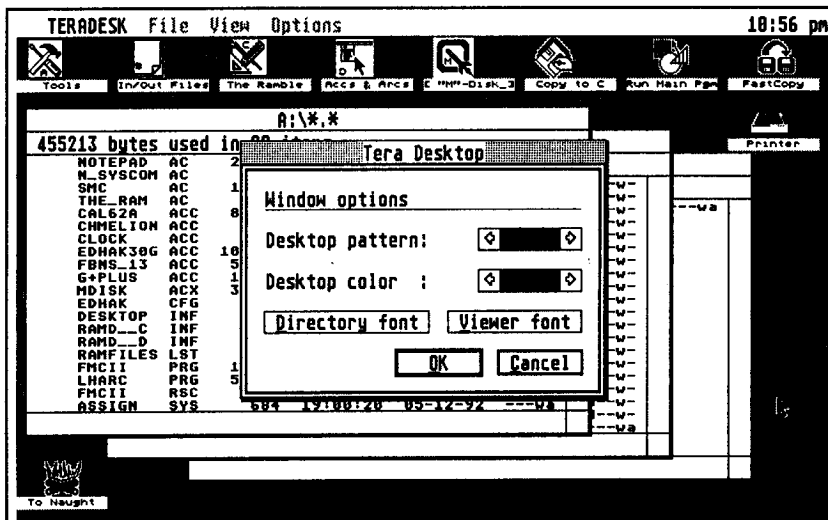


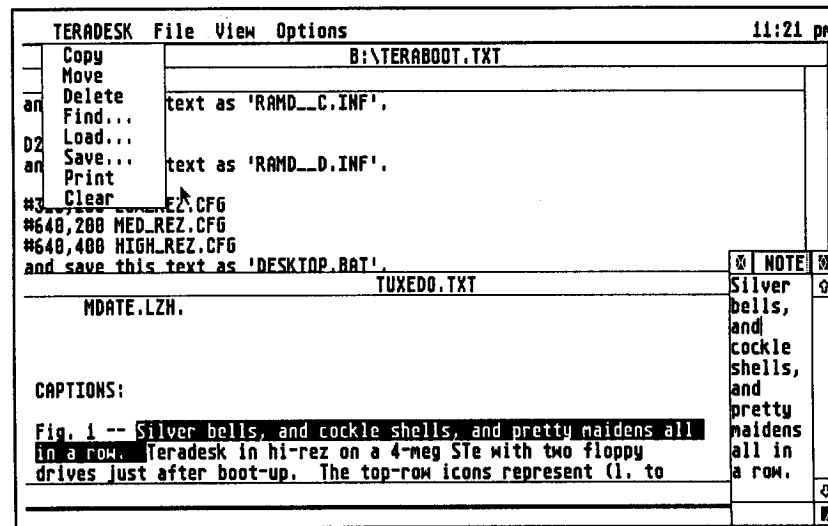
Figure 2—And what does this other garden grow? An icon for the floppy-emulating M-disk RAM for one thing. Teradesk lets one design and store various desktop lay-outs. A click on *Load settings...* under *Options* lets one pick one's pick. The Teradesk message boxes come with or without move bars; user's choice.

lessen the need for scrolling. On the other hand, one may elect a larger print for easier reading from a distance.

★ A masking facility lets one decide which files should show on the menus and which should be hidden from sight.

★★ *Two stars for this one:* Teradesk lets one view a file in a GEM window, called *Viewer*, with vertical and horizontal scroll-bars—see Figure 3. In fact, one may open a number of files, each in its own window and with a choice of views: ASCII or hexmode. These windows are not only resizable, their “full” boxes serve as toggles between two window sizes. Thus one can cut down a viewer window to a very small size, place it anywhere on the screen, and toggle back to the full-size window by clicking on the “full” box.

★★★ *We're up to three stars now!* One or more viewer windows may be retained from session to session with the *Save settings* option. Text is automatically reloaded from disk and sliders are put back where they were last so that one may



Help from the CN Disk Library

Available from *Current Notes* Library is Disk No. 843, *Teradesk at Tuxedo Junction* with all the programs listed in the references (except *Chameleon* because we respect its author's wish to not have it appear on *any* PD disk. However, readers who order the disk may obtain a copy of *Chameleon* by mailing a blank disk in a stamped, self-addressed envelope either to the Editor of *Current Notes* or to the author.

This new CN disk includes nearly 70 “hot-icon” programs found in TUXEDO__J.LZH as well as Al Fasoldt's helpful article, “Secrets of the Teradesk.”

Order from CN Library, 122 N. Johnson Rd, Sterling VA 20164. CN disks are \$4 each (plus \$1 S&H/six disks).

retain one's place in a text from one session at the computer to the next (see bottom of Figure 1). Wie geht's, Mr. Gates?

★ Multiple-file handling is made easier by automatic scrolling when the mouse pointer is moved to a window's top or bottom edge. And *Show Info* under *File* can be used for a sequence of marked files instead of for just one file at a time.

★ Teradesk offers pretty well any advantage TOS 2.06 has over older versions such as the STE's V1.06, although it does not handle well the XCONTROL.ACC's CPX's and I had to devise a somewhat round-about way of accommodating them (see below under *Extended Control Panel*). Table I compares three desktops.

Used with the color monitor, Teradesk comes up in medium resolution. This desktop does not let one change directly from medium to low resolution or *vice-versa*, but clicking on the *File* option *Quit*, or typing [Control][Q], brings up the underlying, Atari desktop which does permit the change from

Figure 3—Where function follows form. The *Notepad* accessory habitually comes up, 3-3/4 in. wide by 2-3/8 in. high, near the top-left corner of the screen. It can be moved and/or sized, and line lengths stretch or stack themselves to show the text clearly. A second click on the accessory's name calls up a list of *Notepad* options. The window with Teraboot text is Teradesk's *Viewer*. One may toggle it between ASCII and hex modes. An *EdHak* window displays a sentence highlighted for *Kwiksend*.

Table 1. Desktop Menus Compared**TOS 1.06**

File	View	Options
Open	Show as Icons	Install Disk Drive...
Show Info...	Show as Text	Install Application...
New Folder...	Sort by Name	Set Preferences...
Close	Sort by Date	Save Desktop
Close Window	Sort by Size	Print Screen
Format...	Sort by Type	Blitter

TOS 2.06

File	View	Options
Open...	[O] Show as Icons	Install Icon...
Show Information...	[S] Show as Text	Install Application...
Search...	[L]	Install Devices
Delete Item...	[D] Sort by Name	Remove Desktop Icon [R]
Create Folder...	[F] Sort by Date	Set Preferences...
Close Directory	[B] Sort by Size	Read .INF File...
Close Top Window	[C] Sort by Type	Desktop Configuration... [M]
Bottom to Top	[W] No sort	Save Desktop [V]
Select All Items	[E] Size to Fit	Print Screen [P]
Set File Mask...	[X] Set Color & Style...	Blitter
Format Floppy Disk...		

Teradesk

File	View	Options
Open ^O	Show as text	Install application... ^L
Show info... ^S	Show as icons	Install desk icon... ^I
New folder... ^F	Sort by name ^G	Install window icon...
Close ^U	Sort by extension ^H	Change icons... ^D
Close window ^C	Sort by date ^J	Remove icons... ^R
Select all ^A	Sort by size ^N	Set preferences... ^P
Cycle windows ^W	Unsorted ^V	Editor...
Quit ^Q	Hidden files ^X	Program options... ^M
	System files ^Y	Window options...
	Set file mask... ^T	Save settings ^K
		Load settings...
		Save settings as...

one color resolution to the other under its own *Set preferences...* option. The regular, Atari desktop also serves for running any program not compatible with *Teradesk*. (I ran into one or two.) *Teradesk* may be re-installed over the regular desktop by clicking on DESKTOP.PRG in the folder DESKTOP (provided the boot disk is in Drive A.) For many details and additional features, check out the manual that comes with the program. An excellent document put on GENie by Al Fasoldt shows how to get still more mileage out of *Teradesk* than is immediately obvious from the manual. Don't overlook it.²

The *Teradesk* program runs on top of any version of TOS, although TOS versions 1.0 and 1.02 require the intervention of another PD product, *StartGEM*.³ The whole takes up about 140K. What follows is a description of a customized *Teradesk* with a slew of public-domain programs. The actual assembly is detailed in the guide named *TeraBoot Step-by-Step*. I should think that one needs at least two meg of RAM to profit from it, although four meg is far more comfy.

² Al Fasoldt, "Secrets of Teradesk." GENie ST Lib. 28513: TERASECR.LZH.

³ *StartGEM*. GENie ST Lib. 6383: STARTGEM.ARC. It should be in the auto folder.

RAM Disks

Preferring as I do to use my four meg STE without harddrive (or floptical or some such) until there is a proven need for it, I use RAM disks. These offer several advantages: they are tops for speedy data entry and retrieval, they permit rapid file transfer to other disks, they require no maintenance, and they are freely available from the public domain.

A RAM disk saves time and avoids excessive detraction by copying to it those programs that are frequently stopped and started during a single session at the computer. Thus RAM disks are especially useful for programming, for downloading from the networks, and for work with data bases.⁴

I use three RAM disks. The principal one, *The Ramble*, is my regular workhorse. It is especially useful for activities that require more than one program. Working with two or more application programs in RAM offers one advantage of multitasking: it almost eliminates the delay when a program is launched.⁵

Another RAM disk, labelled *Accs & Arcs*, holds some often used accessories in addition to the six directly accessible from the desk. It also contains my *FastCopy-3* and a suit of decompression programs, see Figure 4.^{6,7,8,9} They are put there during the boot-up by the procedure described below under the heading *RAMfiles* and they are, therefore, always available throughout a session

at the computer regardless of what disk is in Drive A. A third RAM disk, Aux RAM, is an accessory that is sized and loaded during a session if and when a need for it arises. It can be dispensed with at will. I use the German utility *Chameleon* to load, respectively, dismiss, any extra accessory.¹⁰ One may work with two or more *Chameleons*.

As to the floppy drives, Drive A, *Tools*, is for boot-up and application programs and Drive B, *In/Out Files*, serves as my "In" and "Out" trays. I keep my work separate from my tools. I usually begin my sessions with a general files disk, a

⁴ Mark Baines, "RAM Disks." *ST Applications*, July 1993, p. 28.

⁵ An old ST as a spare takes care of that other big advantage of multitasking: doing two things at the same time, and doing so without cross-interference.

⁶ Martin Backschat, *FastCopy*. GENie ST Lib. 15088: FCOPY30.LZH.

⁷ ARCX. *Start* disks, Fall 1987–May 1990. Similar is GENie ST Lib. 8264: ARCX.TTP.

⁸ LHARC.TTP. Can't find my source, but similar is GENie ST Lib. 23823: LZH201K.LZH.

⁹ Vincent Pomey, ZIP2TOS.PRG. GENie ST Lib. 29519: STZIP23.TOS.

¹⁰ Karsh Isakovic, *The Chameleon*. Included with GENie ST Lib. 21050: CHMECUST.LZH.

precursor of sorts of the Mac's famous *HyperCard* in Drive B. Being more modest than the people at Apple Computers, I call it *HypoCard*. And so may you because this dowdy, intentionally not specially iconized, but most practical device is not proprietary. More on *HypoCard* below.

My reasons for having a separate RAM disk for extra accessories and utilities are to have them permanently available and to avoid risking their accidental removal from my principal atelier, *The Ramble*. Besides, I like to keep extraneous clutter away from the software used in such occupations as writing or home accounting or programming or whatever happens to be on my plate.

RAM disks are in plentiful supply (see Table II). They may be classified along various lines:

- a. accessories vs programs initiated from an AUTO folder,

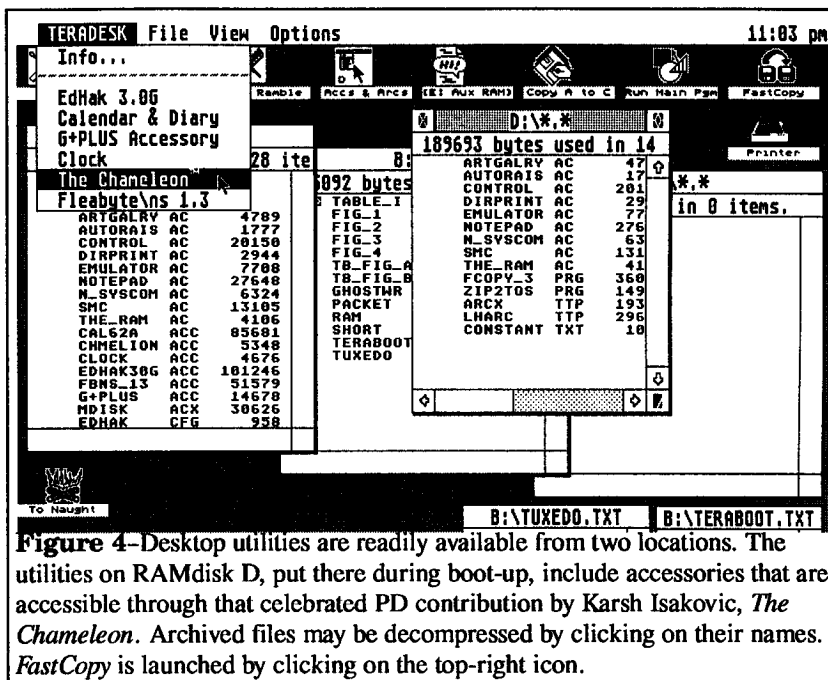


Figure 4—Desktop utilities are readily available from two locations. The utilities on RAMdisk D, put there during boot-up, include accessories that are accessible through that celebrated PD contribution by Karsh Isakovic, *The Chameleon*. Archived files may be decompressed by clicking on their names. *FastCopy* is launched by clicking on the top-right icon.

Table II – RAM Disks.

Accessories:

- THE RAM, 4.106 K
multiple installation possible; disk lost upon soft reset.
- RAMDISK, 3.770 K + 0.598 K RSC
only one installation possible as Drive M; disk lost upon soft reset..
- SI RAM, 7.936 K + 2.432 K RSC
only one installation possible; may create DAT file for reset after shut-down; spooler added.
- RAMBABY, 34.193 K
only one installation possible; may create AUT file for reset after shutdown; spooler added.
- MDISK 6.94, 30.626 K
floppy disk emulation.

Auto Run:

- FAST RAM, 1185 K
multiple installation possible (see *TeraBoot Step-by-Step*); files survive rez change.
- FLASHDISK, 3438 K (+ 1187 CLEAR.PRG)
multiple installation; one installation reset-proof.
- RAMPLUS, 2.397 K + PLUSMOD, 2.046 K
files survive rez change; default set w. Plusmode, but may be changed using space bar; spooler, screen saver, mouse doubler.
- TRAMDISK, 2.960 K
files don't survive rez change; floppy disk emulation.
- MAXIDISK, 7.760 K + INF
files survive rez change; file compression provides extra disk capacity.
- RDE, 11064 K (+ 4898 RSC)
a program for creating a ...-K RAmDisk that is reset-proof; can emulate a floppy; useable for booting-up.

- b. those that hog operating RAM as opposed to those that take up only a few kilobytes,
- c. RAM disks with or without added features,
- d. disks of fixed capacity as opposed to flexible ones such as those that permit the trimming of their free RAM in favor of the computer's general RAM, or automatically compress files when the need arises, and, finally,
- e. simple RAM disks for computational Bumsteads, as opposed to sophisticated ones with jargon-laden manuals for the supercomputer.

My preference is for small, single-purpose utilities whose use places little or no demand on human memory. Among the programs I particularly like is *FastRAM*.¹¹ It is a small, 1185-byte utility for the auto folder, and with a little tinkering (step 3 of *TeraBoot Step-by-Step*), one can run more than one *FastRAM* disk. The reader pressed for internal RAM space may take a look at *MaxiDisk*, which compresses files as they are copied to it and, hence, accomodates at least 50% more than its assigned capacity.¹² Thus a 500-K *MaxiDisk* stores more than 750-K of uncompressed material. However, setting things up is a bit more cumbersome than seems necessary today.

Among the accessories, *The RAM* is my favorite.¹³ It takes 3770 bytes. Compare this with the 34 K needed by *RAM Baby* of bygone years. Not an inconsiderable portion of those bytes must have been assigned for playing jubilant tunes. Worth a look is *M-Disk*, onto which one may copy an entire floppy, including boot sector and file-allocation tables.¹⁴ After-

¹¹ Charles Smeton, *FastRAM*. ST Format disk, No. 29, Dec. 1991, p. 25. Also GENie ST Lib. 612: FASTERM11.TTP.

¹² M. Böhm, revised by U.R. Anderson, *MaxiDisk*. GENie ST Lib 27085: MAXID__22.LZH.

¹³ *The RAM*. GENie ST Lib. 27116: THE__RAM.LZH.

¹⁴ C. Strunk, *M-Disk*. GENie ST Lib. 28247:MDISK694.LZH.

wards, one may copy the *M-Disk's* contents onto another disk and do so with or without formatting the destination disk. This accessory's documentation lists other plusses, that I haven't checked out: PS/2-compatible formatting and a hard-disk backup/restoration program.

A lot of experience (read: frustration) went into gaining the modest amount of knowledge captured in the previous paragraphs, but let's not look gift horses in the mouth and just happily move on to other aspects of the beautiful, Tera-based desktop. It is to save others from some agony that I prepared the accompanying guide, *TeraBoot Step-by-Step*. It details the construction of a desktop system from a dozen or so public-domain programs. You may create your own variations—and/or improvements!—of course.¹⁵

RAMfiles

Files may be automatically copied to RAM disk with a two-part assembly, designed and put in the public domain by Nigel Garvey. It consists of RAMFILES.PRG and RAMFILES.LST.¹⁶ If RAMfiles is in the auto folder, it looks for a file named RAMFILES.LST in the disk's root directory; if it is in another folder, it looks for the list in the same folder. The list is in ASCII and states what files are to be copied from where to where. Some RAMdisks have the capability of a RAMfiles built into them as a special feature (see Table II).

To simplify the boot-disk's visual appearance, I placed the programs to be put on RAMdisk in a special folder, TO_RAM_D and the listing reads simply

```
A:\*.AC, D:\
A:\TO_RAM_D\*.*, D:\
```

Why did I not also put the *.AC files in the folder? Well, that's because of the way Hazel does her thing ...

O Hazel, My Hazel

In the auto folder, right behind that correctional facility, POOLFX92.PRG, resides a short program called *Hazel*.¹⁷ A brainchild of Greg "Maddog" Knauss, *Hazel* only rates the message *Hazel ignored* during boot-up. It appears right after the advert for Poolfix. However, if one holds down the left shift-key in time, which is when the Poolfix announcement appears, *Hazel* will quietly and elegantly offer choices of just which auto-folder programs, accessories, desktop files, and assign systems (if there is a choice) one may wish to activate or deactivate. Changes made are registered on the boot disk (PRG/PR, ACC/AC, INF/IN, SYS/SY). *Hazel*, in short, is a shy, unprepossessing *Superboot*.¹⁸ I haven't much work for *Hazel*, really, but she is a comfort to have around.

¹⁵ For a review of a somewhat different, ante-Teradeskian approach: Ofir Gal, "RDE: The Ultimate RAM Disk?" *ST Applications*, Aug. 1992, p.34. Prof. Evans' RDE is available as GENIE ST Lib. 27128: RDE_V2.LZH.

¹⁶ Nigel Garvey, *RAMfiles*. *ST User disk*, Oct. 1991.

¹⁷ Greg "Maddog" Knauss, *Hazel*. *STart disk*, Apr./May 1991.

¹⁸ For a short treatise of boot disks and *Superboot's* merits, see: Mark Baines, "Boot Disks." *ST Applications*, Aug. 1993, p. 28. The article also reminds us that a floppy kept in a drive while switching off the computer will sooner or later become corrupted. This may be due to power glitches.

At this point, I like to return to a statement from my essay of six months ago about the *personal* in personal computing.¹⁹ What is needed in personal computing, I then ventured, "is a variety of simple, intuitively used and readily adaptable software that cover a lot of ground in flexibly adaptive and agreeable ways." At that time, I had application softwares in mind, their mutual cooperation helped along, perhaps, by small service programs such as, possibly, pipeline programs and/or symbol converters. But a principle is a principle and, as we see here, the principle applies very much to work at the desktop.

To set apart the nature of personal computing, let me tentatively suggest these distinctions in a computer's use:

Business/office computing:

- ★ few (some highly specialized) tasks
- ★ massive data (*data processing*)
- ★ mostly routine work
- ★ high-speed of data runs often desirable
- ★ sophisticated computer expertise available

Personal computing:

- ☆ many, quite common tasks and subtasks
- ☆ few data within single categories
- ☆ mostly non-routine work
- ☆ easy access to a variety of tools desirable
- ☆ user's computer expertise limited

These distinctions ought to affect how we think about hardware and software design; and, of course, about system design. They also ought to direct the focus of supporting literature—books and periodicals, as well as sales literature and advertising. As for the desktop, though we all welcome a pretty face, it is first and foremost the control center of a system. (Cf the box, *Form Follows Function*.) Desktops best for business computing are not likely to be the best for personal computing. For efficient, truly personal computing, it appears desirable that the system permits *interactive multitasking*, a multitasking that is more than merely programs working side by side, but rather a multitasking that lets programs work together. Smoothly.

Icons

The *Teradesk* package comes with a file named ICONS.RSC. It contains a number of desktop icons. However, the ones shown in the accompanying illustrations were found elsewhere. The item TUXEDO_J.LZH on GENIE (see below) contains a file, ICONS__XX.RSC, with the icons used here. The name must be changed to ICONS.RSC for the *Teradesk* program to recognize it. Some of the icons shown in the accompanying illustrations serve as "hot icons" for files transfers and for program launching.

Hot Clicks

The hot-icon *Copy A to C* connects with a RAMfiles program to copy files from whatever disk is in Drive A to RAM disk C. For example, my disk with the *DEGAS* drawing pro-

¹⁹ Henry K. van Eyken, "The Personal in Personal Computing." *Current Notes*, May 1993, p. 50.

gram has in its root directory a RAMfiles program along with this listing in ASCII:

```
A:\DEGELITE.*, C:\
```

```
A:\PRINTERS\EPSON.PRT, C:\PRINTERS\
```

With the *DEGAS* disk in Drive A, clicking on the icon *Copy A to C* copies files as instructed by this script.

An alert box will pop up if one clicks on the desktop icon when the root directory of the disk in Drive A does not contain a RAMfiles program. To prevent possible confusion in the link with the hot-icon, I changed the name RAMFILES.PRG on my application disks to COPY_TO_C.PRG.

A designated application on Drive A may be launched by clicking on the desktop icon *Run Main Pgm*, which is linked to a home-made program, MAIN_A.PGM, on the disk. The latter launches the main program on whatever disk is in Drive A. Although all my application disks contain a MAIN_A.PGM, the actual contents of these launching programs differ in that each one calls for a specific application by name. For example, the MAIN_A.PGM on my *1st WordPlus* disk is a compiled version of a GFA BASIC program whose .LST version reads:

```
RESERVE 152
```

```
ax=EXEC(0,"A:\WORDPLUS.PRG", "", "")
```

```
RESERVE
```

```
END
```

Recently placed in GENie's ST Library is the file TUXEDO_.LZH with a collection of nearly 70 such small launching programs for various application programs.²⁰ I hope that this also makes the point, to which I shall return from time to time, that even for the general computist a little knowledge of BASIC or some other programming language is useful.

Connecting the disk's MAIN_A.PGM with the corresponding desktop icon is detailed in point 18 of the guide *TeraBoot Step-by-Step*.

File Decompression

The folder *TO_RAM_D* contains three unarching programs. I use LHARCTTP, ARCXTTP and ZIP2TOS.PRG. Double-clicking on an .LZH file, no matter where located, will let it explode inside a folder automatically created on Disk C. As my *Teradesk* stands today, however, double-clicking on an .ARC file lets it decompress in the directory where it is situated and, hence, it is best to first move an .ARC file to RAM disk C and only then double-click on it. Similarly, a .ZIP file should, like an .ARC file, be copied or moved first to Drive C. Double-clicking on a .ZIP file connects it to a ZIP2TOS.PRG which then turns it into self-extracting .TOS file by the same name, i.o.w. a file that may be unarched later by double-clicking on it.²⁰ I know, the different ways of dealing with archived files bespeaks of an inconsistency, but I had to make do with the means at hand.

Again, all this needs some preparation, now by using the option *Install applications*...—see point 19 of the guide. It requires the writing of command lines that adhere to a certain

²⁰ Henry K. van Eyken. GENie ST Lib. 30491: TUXEDO_.LZH. To clearly identify the MAIN_A.PGM programs I named them after the application program they serve, e.g. WORDPLUS.PGM. But after one is put on the appropriate application disk it should be renamed MAIN_A.PGM.

Form Follows Function

Teradesk as described, with some ten active programs in the autofolder and 15 utilities transferred to a RAM disk, takes two minutes to boot up. Efficiency is not served by using this disk for a simple, one-task session. That is why it is convenient to make one's application disks self-booting. All mine have a Desktop information file including the lines:

```
#Z 01 A:\MAIN_A.PGM
```

and

```
#G 03 FF *.PGM @
```

These disks travel light with slim auto-folders and a minimum of accessories. Of course, *The Chameleon* is a must for people with afterthoughts.

A person whose computing is limited to this sort of activity doesn't normally need a 4-meg machine, nor an external drive for that matter. After loading the required program, the internal drive becomes available for the In/Out files. An adjustable, accessory RAM disk would be helpful for moving files about.

A somewhat specialized desktop, one that ought to be looked over specifically by those who use their computer for administrative tasks and/or use the Atari Portfolio pocket computer as well, is *Make-a-Date* by Jonathan Carroll.²⁷ The desktop has buttons for a scheduler, a phone book, a "to do" list, and notes. It also has buttons for launching an editor and up to three other programs.

²⁷ Jonathan Carroll, *Make-A-Date*. GENie ST Lib. 20009: MDATE.LZH.

protocol (ARGV). Because I don't know anything about this other than having seen some examples without explanation of the underlying design, I don't know how to get *all* types of archived files unfolding on *The Ramble* without moving them there first. Maybe that isn't possible anyway with the versions of ARCXTTP and ZIP2TOS.PRG I have on hand. Too bad, but that's how the cookie crumbles right now.

Extensible Control Panel

Because I still rarely use it, I keep Atari's Extensible Control Panel, XCONTROLAC accessory on a separate floppy along with a folder that contains CPX modules.²¹ The panel may be called by the *Chameleon* accessory. It is configured to look for CPX modules on Drive C and these, therefore, must be copied to *The Ramble* before loading the *xcontrol* panel. Clicking on the icon *Copy A to C* will do that. The panel will take in the CPX modules upon loading.

HypoCard

The *HypoCard* disk contains the kind of files people used to put on the Mac's ol' *HyperCard*—lists of phone numbers, jobs to be done, books to be read, what-have-you.²² See Fig-

²¹ Atari Corp., *Extensible Control Panel*. GENie ST Lib. 29751: XCONTROL.LZH

²² It used to be said that on buying a *HyperCard* one gets a Mac thrown in.

ure 1, Drive B, for my hypo-menu. The big, fat difference with *HyperCard* is that *Hypo* works without gaff. Another function of my hypo disk should appeal especially to those with a bent for some procrastination. You see, it is more than a mere device for storing personal notes, it also serves as a holding bin for all sorts of files until I am good and ready to give some thought to where their final destination shall be in my assortment of disks and then have indexed them accordingly (cf. *FILE__INX*).

Ruffles and Flourishes

It'll be going too far to describe all my preferences. The reader can pretty well glean some of them from Figures 1 and 3. Nevertheless, I do like to single out a few utilities: *Art galry*, *Dirprint*, *Notepad*, and *Clock*.

Artgalry, 4789K, lets one view pictures in *DEGAS*, *Neochrome*, and *Tiny* format.²³ Of course, I am looking to extend the range of (common) picture formats without the program acquiring too much heft.

Dirprint, 2944K, lets one print out a disk's directory.²⁴ It comes in handy from time to time, but it would be a full-blown asset if it could also pipeline the directory on an editor of one's choice or in a textfile on disk.

Notepad, 27648K, is a scribbler for on-screen use.²⁵ Up to a point it emulates the extra pieces of paper that one so often uses when working at one's ordinary desk. Notepad's outstanding merit is that line lengths automatically adjust to the width of its window, Figure 4. It also accepts direct deposits put there by EdHak's *Kwiksend* or by my *Fleabyte* calculator accessories. It is these kind of features that make *Notepad* contribute so handsomely to the computer becoming a truly personal device. *Notepad's* file options (Copy, Move, Delete, Find..., Load..., Save..., Print, Clear) are accessed by a second click on the accessory's name. But I would like to get a bit more out of it still: an ability to pipeline marked text directly to other programs would make *Notepad* tops.

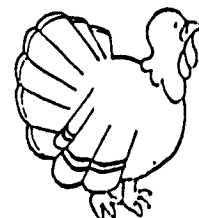
Clock, 4676K, which I use together with the *Forget-me-Clock* cartridge, shows the time in minutes.²⁶ By not showing the seconds, it avoids that irritating distraction of rapid movements in the corner of one's field of view, the top-right corner of the screen. The right shift-key toggles from time to date with automatic return to time. Marvelous. However, I wish that, in the spirit of the times, *Clock* could be run as a program in the auto folder instead of taking up an accessory slot. That would make room for a non-autonomous accessory, like *Notepad*.

End of a STart

So, this then is an account of one user's adventures with the *Teradesk* alternative desktop, a user who does not own a harddisk. but now works with a pretty efficient desktop never-

theless. I believe that many harddrive owners will be no less happy with *Teradesk* than I, a more slovenly Atarist, am. I also expect that many readers will be quite capable of making improvements over what has been recorded here or who would select other, still more suitable programs for their boot-disk assemblage. I certainly would like to hear from them as well as from people who can fill gaps in my knowledge, especially about writing command lines according to the ARGV protocol (or any protocol, for that matter--this amateur has much to learn) or about where one may find small dc-archivers that let one deposit its output at a drive of choice. A good desktop set-up is worth perfecting. My address is: 11 Falcon, Lakefield, Quebec, Canada. Postal code: J0V 1K0. On GENie: H.VANEYKEN. You may also address your comments to our party's gracious host, the Editor of *Current Notes*.

There are some facets of this account that shall come back to hound us in next month's tale about things that go burp in the byte and spooky happenings that make the blood run cold. Until then, have fun!



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²³ Charles F. Johnson, *Art Gallery*. GENie ST Lib. 8318: ARTGALRY.ARC.

²⁴ *Direct Print*. GENie ST Lib. 744: DIRPRINT.ACC.

²⁵ R.Coate, *Notepad*. GENie ST Lib. 18156: NOTEPAD.LZH. Another interesting notepad, a 10-page tear-off accessory with automated save-to-bootdisk goes by the same name: B. Foster, GENie ST Lib. 3560: NOTEPAD.ARC. (7376-K acc. + 3960-K sys.)

²⁶ S. Sanders, *Zeitgeist*. GENie ST Lib. 23219: SDSZEIT.LZH.

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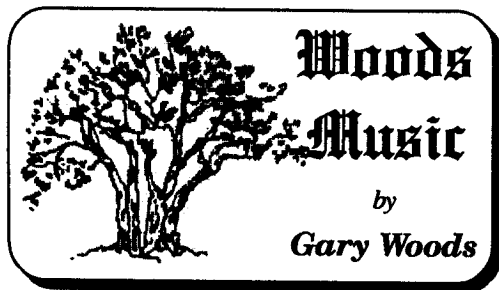
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One of my biggest gripes about music which is created on computers is that it sounds like music created on computers. It's very rigid and, frankly, not very musical. This is fine if you're playing Techno, but if you're trying to do something with a little more feel to it, you've got to find a way to loosen up the tracks and make them sound like a human played them.

Recently, I came across a product that just happens to run on my favorite sequencer, *Cubase*. In a nut shell, the company has sampled some of the great grooves from the past like "Honky Tonk Woman," and "Papa Was A Rolling Stone," and placed them in a form that can be overlayed onto a sequenced part. Figure 1 shows a list of some of the basic grooves and their alterations. Figure 2 displays the Drum Editor from *Cubase* with the arrow on Groove Quantize. Figure 3 is an example of a Straight 8th note High Hat Pattern, and Figure 4 is how the part has been pushed and pulled to make it sound more musical. Finally, Figure 5 shows the Feel Chart for "Honky Tonk Woman."

Ray Williams is one of the principals of the company who has been working on DNA Grooves and this is the interview that I had the good fortune to conduct with him.

Gary: What are DNA Grooves?

Ray: DNA Grooves are snapshots of performances. What we do is measure the two bar frame, and the timing variations that the player makes on each note. This is done with a combination of hardware and software techniques we developed using the Synclav.

Gary: Proprietary software that you developed?

Ray: We tried using the off-the-shelf stuff like, *Alchemy*, and *Avalon*, but it's just not powerful enough.

Gary: What does NED's shaky present do for you?

DNA GROOVES

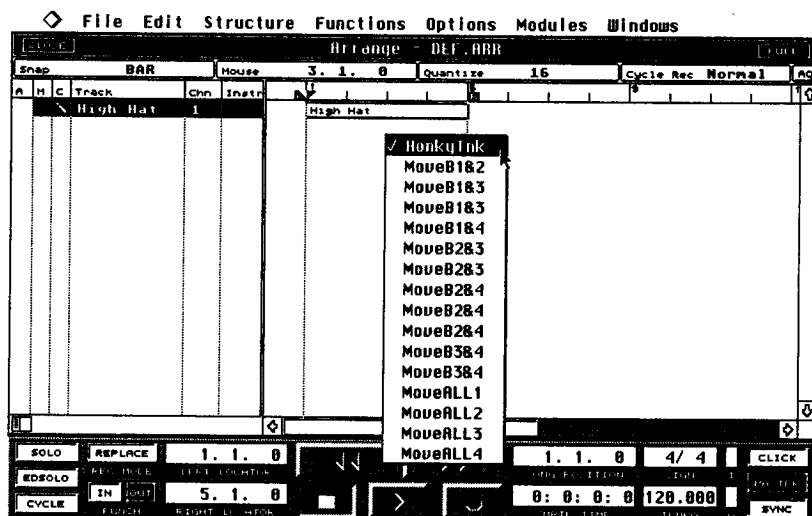


Figure 1. Basic grooves and their alterations.

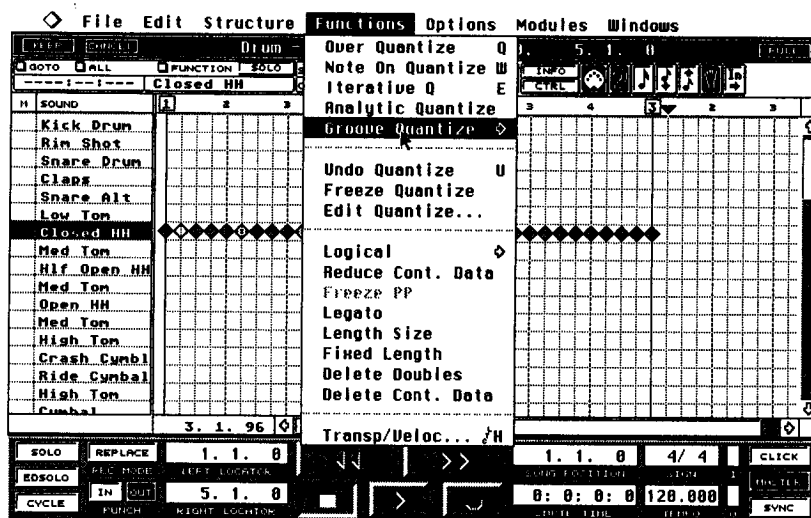


Figure 2. Drum editor from Cubase.

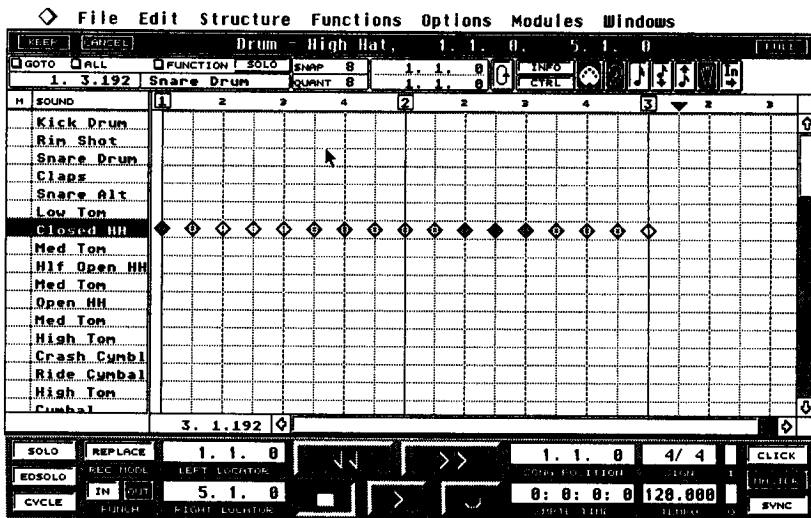


Figure 3. Straight 8th note High Hat Pattern.

Ray: A lot of anxiety because three weeks ago the power supply on the Synclav failed. Fortunately, we have a couple of secondary Synclav computers so we can take parts out of one and put them in the other, but it was scary. In fact, we might have to eventually move everything off the Synclav, because there is just no future there.

Gary: What other platform would you go to?

Ray: Probably a MacIntosh. We do most of the development on the Mac.

Gary: Running ProTools?

Ray: Running some ProTools, but ProTools would just be the capturing device. We'd have to write the software to do the analysis for the Mac because DNA is produced with a program. It's not produced by me sitting down and manufacturing something. The whole thing is automated. You have to do some cutting, and truncating at the beginning on the input, but once the barlines have been set in the sample, everything else is automated.

Gary: How do you go about making the grooves?

Ray: The audio material is identified, and cut. We then analyze where all the attacks are of each hit within that phrase, and get a measurement, which is just a list of numbers. Within that list of numbers there are flams and all kinds of anticipated hits. Some hits that don't belong, some hits that are missing. We sometimes have to analyze this data and ascertain the second, third, and fourth parts out of all this information to get a tendency for those missing hits.

Gary: Do the artists tend to repeat their irregularities?

Ray: There is definitely some style. In fact, from song to song you could see differences in the Feel Charts. For instance, we did a lot of James Brown analysis, and you could tell when certain drummers were playing because they had a certain style and tendency. Then you would see some totally different tendencies and you would know it was a different drummer.

Gary: Did you look at early James or late James?

Ray: Early James, because by the time you got to "Living In America," he was quantized, so we couldn't really use it.

Gary: Who were some of the artists you used besides James Brown?

Ray: Lisa Stanfield, which we found very, very good because she uses drum loops which are great. We looked at Earth, Wind, and Fire. We even looked at Madonna, "Justify My Love." We looked at Snap with his song called "The Power" and Toto, "Rosanna." On that one, we got the dynamics as well on the first eight bars.

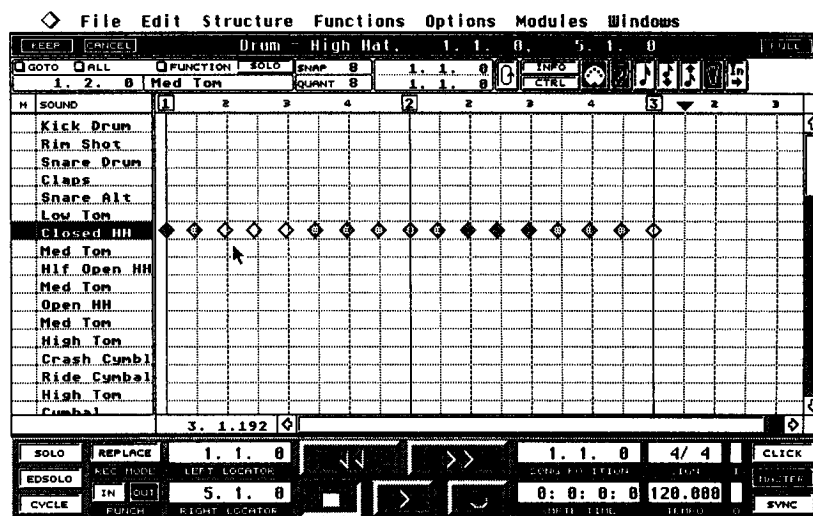


Figure 4. Adjustments to make piece sound more musical.

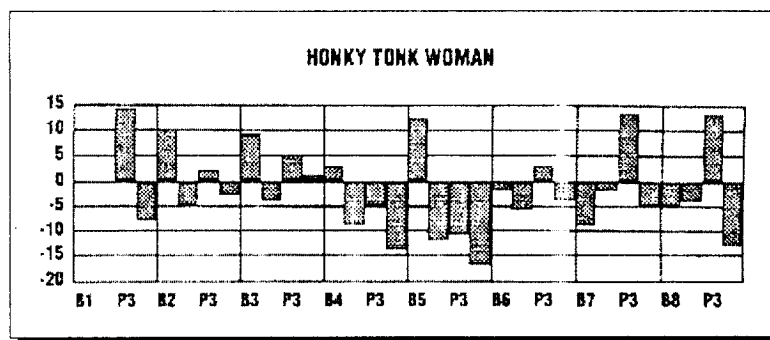


Figure 5. Feel chart for "Honkey Tonk Woman."

Gary: How long does it take you to break down a song?

Ray: It depends on how complicated it is. We did an extraction from a Sade song called "Cherry Pie" which is on Diamond Life. Because the opening was just High Hats, that took two hours to DNA. But if you're doing some James Brown, every time he says "Oooooowww," that wipes whole areas of instruments and you can't really pick where that drum hit was when he let out his soul scream. So on a James Brown thing you have to do a lot more work to get at where the notes are than on something like Sade. It's a combination of factors. Sometimes it takes three days to analyze something.

Gary: How do you load the software?

Ray: Cubase has the facility to Edit, Save, and Load, Groove Quantize Templates. We supply the DNA in a Groove Template form.

Gary: Can the user Mix and Match groups of grooves?

Ray: If you had a shuffle for example, like "All Around The World," by Lisa Stanfield, and then you had "Fool in the Rain," by Led Zeppelin, which is also a good shuffle, those two would almost always work together. Each Part can have a completely different groove on it or that groove could be from a totally different song. The point I'm making is that some grooves tend to be incompatible.

Gary: *What is the supporting documentation like?*

Ray: We wrote a 36-page manual that fits into the *Cubase* Folder, and it explains everything that is on the disk. It relates the thought process behind DNA, and how to use it conceptually. Secondly, we put in an "APP Notes Newsletter," which we are going to print quarterly. It's going to have tips on particular user type situations, and examples of how people are using the grooves. You get a free subscription for a year of this "APP Notes." Read the manual and get an understanding and then read the "APPNotes," and follow that through your first tune and from then on you're an expert. Because, really, there is no true one way of using the software. There are basic principals you have to understand, but after that, it's like, you tell me how you're going to use it.

Gary: *How are the banks divided?*

Ray: They're divided by Beat Divisions. We have all the 8th notes together, 8th note triplets, 16th notes, 16th note triplets, 32nd notes, and so on. They are all grouped in banks of 16 based on the same song.

Gary: *You reference them by song?*

Ray: Yes, they are all grouped by songs, so you would have "Babylon Sisters," and all the different variations of that feel in all the beat divisions in one folder. The next folder would be "Honky Tonk Woman," and it'll have all the same set of variations for that particular song. If you're doing an 8th note triplet jazz thing, you could call up "Babylon Sisters," which was never really meant to be a jazz tune, but you can use the same feel on that. We did a demo for Oscar Peterson, and he liked the "Fool in the Rain" shuffle so much he thought he could use it on jazz. "Fool in the Rain," was a Led Zeppelin tune. Here's a giant of jazz thinking, "I can use that, that feels great."

Gary: *What information is on the Feel Charts?*

Ray: The Feel Chart was a late addition to the DNA Manual. When we put out the grooves, one of the first problems our beta-testers reported was there was no way to predict what the groove was going to be before loading it. You had to load the groove, listen to it and find "nah, I don't like that." We had to come up with a standard way of describing what the feel of a particular song was. We came up with this bar chart which we call the Feel Chart, which basically shows each 16th note of the master groove and where each note is relative to the quantize point. If a note is late, it has a bar below the line, and if it's early above the line. If it's right on the money, it's right on the line.

You can see shuffles very easily because every other note has a long spike downwards. Also, it's a good way for us to analyze the sets that we've put out. The Feel Chart gives a quick way to look at the Feel of the thing without looking at numbers, and visualize how the notes in your part are going to move relative to the quantize point. From looking at a Feel Chart, I could tell if it feels straight, if it's a shuffle, if it's ahead of the beat, if it's behind the beat, if it's really behind like "Superstition," by Stevie Wonder, and so on. It also lets

me know how I could fix it to suit my needs. You might want to use Iterative Quantize on whatever groove you use to tighten up the feel a little bit.

Gary: *So you use a combination of the two types of quantizing?*

Ray: Absolutely. I use Iterative Quantize a lot, because some times I might find I love the feel of "Superstition," but it's just too wild. So, I might want to tame it by shrinking the whole thing by say 85%, or by 50%. It'll have the same error code, but it'll occur over a smaller range. The Feel Chart is very important; without it, you're guessing.

Gary: *Was there a problem with the two measure link that the templates limit you to?*

Ray: Some grooves change drastically the second half, and some of them remain very consistent. Most of them remain somewhat consistent over two bars. Two examples that come to mind are "Only," by the Police, where it speeds up in the second bar, and "Honky Tonk Woman," where it starts early and gets later. When you put a two bar phrase like that on a piece of music there is a two bar cycle of oscillation that actually sounds kind of cool. Again, you control that by shrinking the range, and using Iterative Quantize to tighten it up. But yes, there are definitely some songs which are discontinuous. The majority of them, however, have similarities all the way through. The only time it really changes drastically is in the fills. When there's a drum fill everything goes out the window.

Gary: *Does everything line up on beat one?*

Ray: No. The first note in the song occurs at 00:00 with *Cubase* and we can't move ahead of that, but for every other point we can push the downbeat of that bar ahead. We have a technique that we use in the template where we throw the first note way at the back of the template. In that way, the note will pick up on the downbeat of the next bar and pull it ahead. A lot of times to get that immediacy, that push, the downbeat has to be ahead. On "Fool in the Rain," by Led Zeppelin which is one of the best shuffles we've seen, the downbeat is way ahead, like 10 ticks ahead. So, we suggest if you're going to use that shuffle that you start your music from bar 2 so you can get that push.

Gary: *Is there anything that Steinberg could help you with?*

Ray: For one, they could implement dynamics in the grooves. Also, they could allow us to load 8 or 16 sets of grooves at once, as opposed to just one. They could allow for the positioning of beat one in being able to slide the music against that imaginary bar by smaller ticks than a whole bar. Those are really the key areas. Implementing velocity and duration, because DNA is a three tier system that we're developing.

Gary: *Explain that please?*

Ray: The timing is the just the first area. To recreate any music we need three things. First, we need the actual timing within each bar. Second is the dynamics. Using the Match Quantize on *Cubase*, we could translate dynamics and

timings. Steinberg has found a way to do that, but we'd like it in Groove Quantize as opposed to Match Quantize. The third thing is Tempo. If we had a measurement of how the musician slowed down and sped up for that entire song we could really recreate it. Basically, you wouldn't know the difference.

Gary: So you're talking about being able to load a Master Track?

Ray: That's right. In the future, DNA would have grooves with the dynamics so that you could use either grooves or dynamics or both. Then, the next generation would be to combine a tempo track with that. The idea is, you might use the feel of Led Zeppelin and the Police, the dynamics of Sade and James Brown, and the tempo of the Beatles and Chaka Khan in one song. We have a way to track and capture all the elements that are in music. These are tangible things that can be stored as macros that you can just load up and put onto your music. Steinberg has to help us with the dynamics and tempo, but it is definitely coming.

Gary: Is there anything you would like to add?

Ray: In Toronto, on September 26th, we will remember the passing of Glenn Gould, who is our most famous pianist. They will show a short film about his life, and play some of his recordings. He did a recording in 1969 of the Goldberg Variations, and apparently, these were his best recordings.

The gentleman who was commissioned to prepare the music for this concert contacted us. He had heard about DNA and wanted us to DNA three movements entirely from beginning to end. This is approximately 60 something bars of music, so we had to get dynamics, tempo, and the rhythm. That took a month to DNA. For each bar we had to enter a new tempo, and even sometimes within a bar there were changes. Without the tempo changes it was flat. As part of the concert, those three pieces are going to be played back on a Yamaha Disklavier Grand Piano, and sitting on top of the piano is going to be *Cubase* playing the Yamaha, recreating his ghost. That's exciting.

Yes, a very exciting concept. To be able to breathe life into music, which all too often these days sounds rather sterile because of the rigid restraints placed on it by our present technology. DNA definitely deserves a look and a listen.

For more information write to:

WC Music Research
P.O. Box 1275, Station K
Toronto, Ont., Canada M4P3E5.
Phones: (416)444-6644; FAX 496-2884.

And as always you can reach me at:

Gary Woods
6428 Valmont St.
Tujunga, CA 91042
Phones: (818)353-7418; FAX 352-6559.

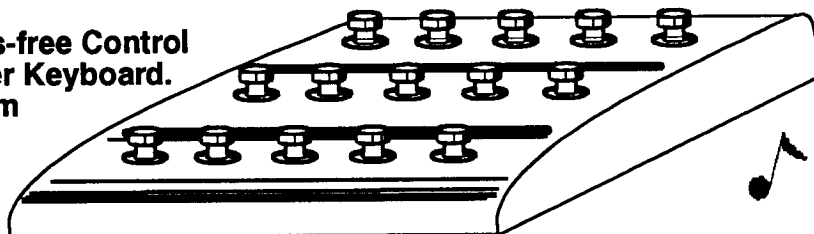
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Clearing the First Hurdle

One of the things I have yet to really touch on with regard to CompuServe is the *actual* cost of the service. At the present time, the online services offer comparable pricing. But they are still costing you every time you log on, so taking care to minimize your costs is something to consider *regardless* of the service you are using.

The *basic* cost is usually an hourly fee and/or a flat rate. For x\$ you get so many hours in the *basic* areas. Go into the "premium" areas of the service and the clock can start ticking to the tune of \$6-\$12 (or more) per hour depending on your baud rate. Go into even "more premium" areas such as research or special services (patent searches, for example) and your cost can jump to an *additional* \$25 or more per hour, *plus* additional "report" fees. These seem to be about \$10 each but each "vendor" probably sets his/her own price.

Now obviously, if you order a CD or new Mustang online, you'll be asked for your credit card number and be billed appropriately. Not so in all the "premium" areas. You *are* told that it will cost you something, but after a very short while, you may find your online bill getting a lot higher than you might have expected.

Qualifying

Presumably, those who use the online services are sort of a "privileged" bunch. Using these services means that you have disposable income to spend on this luxury. You have also spent a little on at least a basic computer, monitor, modem

and maybe even some programs. But you may be asking yourself: Why, exactly, do I even need to have an online service? And after a few big bills, you'll *really* ask that question. The answer will take on a different slant for every individual, but generally, you need the online services to increase your productivity. If you're in business (and who isn't?), then this means that you will hopefully be able to make money more efficiently. And since you're *spending* money to *make* money, it makes cents (pun intended) to spend your online time as efficiently as possible.

Getting a Foothold

Streamlining your CompuServe account is the first step in minimizing your online charges. Take a few minutes to set your default setting (GO TERMINAL) and set up a personal menu. I won't bore you with the screen dumps (especially since this is one of the "free" areas on CIS, but suffice it to say that once you've accomplished this, all you need to do is type GO MENU and your personal list of selections will be at your fingertips. For example, when I type GO MENU or TOP while on CIS, I'll see something like this:

- 1 AtariPro
- 2 Atariarts
- 3 AtariPro
- 4 MIDI
- 5 MIDIIVEN
- 6 MIDIBVEN
- 7 MIDICVEN
- 8 NEWS
- 9 BILLING
- 10 EASYPLEX

By simply selecting the menu item, I am whisked to my favorite area. Once there, I am only presented with the options I want. This is done by typing OPTIONS at the command prompt. Setting up forum options is *not* free of con-

nect time, so don't spend *too* much time doing that. But a few minutes once in a while will actually reduce the time you spend in the forum overall. For example, in the MIDI forums, I am not interested in the equipment of a particular vendor (let's call them "Dog Pianos"). In the options menu, I can go to the "Sections" area and eliminate Dog Pianos message section from my sight. When I ask to see the message area, if Dog Pianos is area 5, then that area will be invisible to me. I can always go back and change that so that I *can* see their messages, but until I get a Dog Piano, I probably will just let that area go to the dogs *g*.

Roll Over, Play Dead. Good Dog!

Let's assume you *are* in a forum and have gotten a few messages you want to answer. You could compose them in the forum or you could log off and call back, or you *could* go to a "free" area (such as billing, practice or terminal settings) and, depending on the program you're using, compose those messages in your message buffer or even in another program, then go *back* to the forum and post the answers you just composed. All the while, you're still connected and online. Again, this presupposes that your terminal program will allow you to work in your buffer or execute another program while connected. If not, this little trick won't work for you.

Hide and Seek

Getting back to the productivity issue, it can be very illusive just how the online services can help you. In a very direct way, it is possible to actually get work through the service by connecting to others in your field. That is how I started writing for this publica-

Jumping Fences

tion, for instance. But having access to a wide range of programs, information and *people* can be *very* beneficial. And while there are certainly "fun" areas on the services (CB Simulator, games, contests, etc), I am *personally* more concerned with the *business* end of things. That might mean discussing micro-breweries with a software vendor (who knows, maybe he'll make me a beta-tester? It has happened...) Or maybe if you're *really* active in a forum and have a good understanding of a particular area, you might be made a SYSOP! Again, it does happen. That's how these services work.

Just Hangin' with the Gang

In a sense, the Atari areas are really blessed by being relatively small (compared to many other areas on CIS) in that the system is a little more "transparent" than it might otherwise be. This allows for a lot more personal interaction and, as a result, a better understanding

of just how "the system" works on the services. Watching the fairly rare "hiring" of a SYSOP in the Atariarts forum, for example, was interesting. We all seemed to know who was in the running, and boy were we nice to each other. The job went to a very qualified fellow, who has done his share of technical writing on the subject of MIDI. But the point is that in the other forums, this kind of activity happens quite privately and the chances of the average person getting "in" or even considered for such an opportunity is much smaller.

Sometimes the water gets a little hot over there in the Atariarts forum. But WIZOP Ron Luks is not afraid to let folks have their say. Even if that means a few feet with bullet holes in them or a size 9 mouth with a size 10 foot in it. Ron even let "the gang" kick around issues that had to do with "other" services because the issues were just too hot to print "over

there." Now that's exciting! All the inside dirt from every horses ... er ... mouth that cares to jump in! Gossip! YES! So how does that help *your* productivity? Hmmm?

Lesson Over

What I *personally* learned is with whom I *would* and with whom I *would not* do business with. I also learned a lot about how some people *do* business, and got a good lesson in how a business can look good or look bad based solely on the comments made by owners, customers and third parties. If I can put that to use the next time I have a "problem" client or PR issue, and if I save a sale (or avoid a potentially expensive problem) then, in a sense, watching the "gossip" has increased my productivity. The words move in mysterious ways across our computer screens. Paying attention to the details can make all the difference in the world. See ya' online?

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by Lou Rocha

November??? It's November already? My goodness, how time flies! By the time you folks read this issue, Atari will be rolling out the Jaguar 64-bit game console! The American Thanksgiving Holiday will be upon you and football fever will be in the air [Go FSU!]. If you are reading this column at halftime, you will find part 2 of the primer on RTC commands, our usual contributions from Larry Duke (Library) and Brian Harvey (Real Time Conferences) and a Developer Spotlight featuring the folks at Two Worlds Software. I hope you enjoy this column as well as your turkey and pumpkin pie.

GEnie Tip – RTC Commands

by Lou Rocha

Last month I covered part one on Real Time Conferences (RTC) commands. These included **/nam** (name), **/sta** (status), **/rai** (raise) and **/sen** (send). This month we will examine a few others that will help make your visit more enjoyable.

I deliberately saved the **/hel** (help) command for this month because it will produce a bewildering list of commands that most novices don't need. Now we are ready to jump into the deep end.

/HELp	List of commands
/BLAnk	add blank lines
/BYE	log/off the RTC
/CALL jj	call on job jj
/ECHO	echo to sender on
/EXIt	return to menu
/JOB	add job # to message
/KNOck rr	knock on door of room rr
/MONitor rr	monitor room rr
/MOVE pg	move to page pg
/NAME nn	add name nn to address
/PRIVate jj	go private with JOB jj
/QUIT	return to menu
/RAIse^hand	get attention of leader
/ROLL nDs	roll n dice of s sides
/ROOM rr	move to room rr
/SCRamble k	scramble, w/ key kkkk
/SEND jj n	sends to job jj, message m

/SHOW hh	show job of address hh
/SQUElch jj	squelch job jj – 4 max
/STATus rr	see users in room rr
/TIME	display time and day
/USERs	see number of users
/WHO jj	see address of JOB jj
/XBLank	exit blank line mode
/XECho	exit echo mode
/XJOB	exit job mode
/XMONitor	exit monitor mode
/XPRivate	exit private mode
/XSCramble	exit scramble mode
/XSQUElch	exit squelch

Let's deal with these commands in groups. The first group has information commands. As we saw last time, **/sta** will list all the occupants in the current room.

Job	City	Room	Sta	Mail-Address
1	Don mills,ON	1	L	ST.LOU
2	Dartmouth,NS	1	N	BRIAN.H
3	Sterling,VA	1	N	JOE.WATERS

To see the occupants of all five rooms in the RTC area, type **/sta ***. You might get a listing like this:

Job	City	Room	Sta	Mail-Address
1	Don mills,ON	1	L	ST.LOU
2	Dartmouth,NS	1	N	BRIAN.H
3	Sterling,VA	1	N	JOE.WATERS
7	Scarboro,ON	5	N	ARCHIVIST
9	North York,ON	3	N	DARLAN

This tells you who is in another room and what job numbers each is assigned. If you wish, you could use the **/roo** command to move to another room, or the **/sen** command to send a private message to his job number without leaving your current room. For example:

/sen 7 Hi Charlie! Can I join you in Room 5?

The **/use** command gives us a quick count of the number of users in the RTC area. This is useful in case you enter the wrong room for a conference. A quick check will tell you where most users have congregated.

/use
Room Users
1 13
3 6
5 2

The **/tim** command provides a quick check of the time and date.

/tim
10:37EDT 10/10/93

The next two commands are related to the job numbers which every RTC participant is automatically assigned when he enters a room in the RTC area. Each job number is unique. If you wish to see everyone's job numbers, as they post messages in the RTC, use the **/job** command.

/job
Job mode is ON.
(Job 1)<ST.LOU> Hello Joe.
(Job 3)<JOE.WATERS> Hi Lou!

(Job 2)<BRIAN.H> Hey, Lou's here!

The Job mode is useful for remembering job numbers in case you want to /send a private message. If you decide you don't want to see job numbers, use the /xjob command to exit.

/xjob

Job mode is OFF.

When Job mode is off, you might want to check someone's job number before sending a private message. (This can avoid very embarrassing situations). To do so, use the /who command.

/who 3

Job 3, is Sterling,VA 1 <JOE.WATERS>.

If you can't locate the job number of the person to whom you wish to send a private message, simply use the /sta command to get a full list of RTC participants. Note: if a person leaves the RTC and returns later, he may be given a new job number. It depends how long he is out of the RTC.

To wrap up this month's tip column I would like to examine some of the ways to leave the RTC. These are pretty straightforward.

The /room command takes you from the current RTC room to the one specified.

/room 3

** <ST.LOU> has left.

Room 3, The Guest Speaker room.

/exit will take you out of the RTC and back to the top of the RoundTable you are attending. For example:

/exit

M475?

If you would like to move from the RTC directly to another RoundTable or to mail, use the /mov command:

/mov 200

M200?

Finally, /bye will log you off GENie immediately.

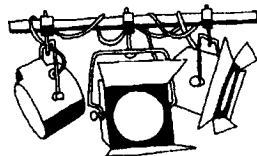
Next month we will finish our primer on RTC commands by looking at some of the advanced commands. In the meantime, why not join a RTC and try out your new-found knowledge? Real Time Conferences are held three times a week in the ST RoundTable . . . Sunday 9:00 p.m. EST is the HelpDesk; Monday 10:00 p.m. EST is the DTP RTC and Wednesday 10:00 p.m. is Open House. The first Friday of every month is Dateline Atari! with Bob Brodie. Don't forget, your GENie rates include four hours of free connect time each month.

Developer Spotlight

by Lou Rocha

Two Worlds Software

This month's spotlight falls on a trio of talented people who have undertaken one of the more adventurous projects on the Atari platform—the development of a new Atari magazine called *Processor Direct*. Although their respective origins are in programming, the folks at Two Worlds Software are very enthusiastic about their new line of work, as you will see. Join us as we meet Sean Dougherty (Publisher), Robert Fernandez (Editor) and Timothy Miller (Technical Editor).



Lou: Welcome to GENie Notes. Sean, let's begin with some information about your personal backgrounds.

Sean: All three of us currently live in Tampa, FL. Tim and I were born in Tampa, and Robert was born in New Jersey and lived there for several years. I was involved in TB-STUG (Tampa Bay ST User Group), and TASTE (Tampa Atari ST Enthusiasts) where I wrote a few articles for the newsletter, and another unnamed group while they all lasted. Tim was in TASTE and the third group, also.

Overall, Tim and I have been very involved in the local Atari community. We even started a user group (the unnamed one) and attempted to get as many people as possible to come; but after about 5 or 6 meetings they stopped. We've always participated in local BBS's message sections, too.

Lou: Describe your origins on the Atari platform. What computers did you own? When did you buy? How did you use them?

Sean: I started with an 800XL in about 1984, moved to a 520ST in 1986 (due to the fact the 8-bit was so great) and then to a Falcon030 this May. I also have a Portfolio and a Lynx to boot. Tim started with an 800XL in 1982, moved to a Mega ST in 1988, and then to a Falcon030 in June. Robert has had a Mega ST for a few weeks now (he has used Atari's in the past; however, he never owned one. This turns out to be a plus since he catches a lot of the "taking knowledge for granted" errors that would normally be overlooked.

Lou: I understand that you began as shareware authors before undertaking the publishing business. Please describe your origins as developers and your experiences on the Atari platform.

Sean: As developers, Two Worlds Software opened doors as a hobby in 1988 producing a tiny little program called *SDSP* (Sean's Digitized Sound Player). I submitted a much improved version to *Antic* for publication in *STart*, called *DigiPlay*, which was rejected. This motivated me to write *DigiPlay Plus* (which must be the most unique digital sound player available, due to a variety of features including a specialized interface, the ability to play lots of sound formats at almost any sample frequency, and the ability to add effects like echo, etc.). Around 1991 Timothy Miller joined me and gave TWS a major boost with the first (and only) 16-color 80 column ANSI terminal emulator for the ST (*ANSITerm*), which included an editable capture buffer and file transfer abilities, among other features. Both programs are shareware and were received very well. Both were featured in the ST RoundTable as Darlah's Treat of the Month.

Lou: Now you have moved on to the publishing arena. Please describe your efforts in this area and any future projects.

Sean: Our current effort is the new magazine *Processor Direct*. This project has taken up almost all of our current resources, but we still have lots of surprising projects for the future. *ANSILink*, a GEM based full ANSI terminal is currently in the works, along with a few other innovative applications to supplement already existing ones, which are being written with well known developers.

The magazine itself is aimed primarily at users of newer Atari machines, but all topics are covered in a format that, hopefully, non-Atari users can understand. *Processor Direct* includes regular columns on a variety of topics including graphics and music, reviews of hardware and software, hints and tips, answers to reader mail, and more. A standard 12 issue subscription is \$25 (US \$33 in Canada), and user group discounts that slash those prices even further are available. For more information on the magazine, just contact us via US mail or GE mail and ask for our brochure and/or user group discount. We can be reached on GENie as P-DIRECT and via USmail at Two Worlds Publishing, 3837 Northdale Blvd. #225, Tampa, FL 33624.

Lou: *What kind of computers are you now using? Peripherals? What software do you use?*

Sean: We are currently using two Falcon030's and a Mega ST. One Falcon030 is used almost exclusively for DTP work (and that occasional leisure activity), and the other Falcon030 is used for article editing, as a review platform, and for software development. The Mega ST acts as a word processor (when *Works* on the Falcon is busy) or occasionally as our game machine «grin». For all of our DTP work, we use the excellent *Calamus SL* desktop publishing package, along with *Outline Art 3*. This combo provides most of the facilities we use to generate graphics and illustrations and the tools with which we actually lay out the pages. On the word processing end, we use mostly *Atari Works*, but occasionally *Word Up* on the Mega ST.

In the realm of software development, we use *Laser C* and *Lattice C*. On the peripherals end, we use two Zoom VFX v.32bis FAXmodems, 2 9-pin printers, an HP 4, my Kenwood (with what other computer can you classify your stereo as an everyday use peripheral?), and two AcerView 56L SVGA multisync monitors. (We also have two Lowrey MIDI keyboards, that we use the old *EZTrack Plus* with; but we use them mostly for leisure purposes.)

Lou: *When do you expect your first issue to be released?*

Sean: Due to constraints on funding (aka advertising), we're going to have to wait until mid-December to go to print, or better even. We may just decide to go ahead for a January cover date.

Lou: *Can you describe the magazine publishing process from the production and sales angles.*

Sean: First, our writers write articles—columnists write on their self-assigned “semipermanent” topic; reviewers write articles reviewing software / hardware / books / videos / etc.; irregular columnists write on their own variable topics; and the general writers write the tips columns, news columns, and other similar regular features.

The articles are then sent to the editing staff where the editor looks over the articles and makes comments, giving the edited manuscripts to the technical editor who makes his comments and the end result is sent back to the writer. The writer then makes any corrections or restructuring and then gets sent back to the editor and the process repeats until the writer and the editing staff okay the item for publication.

Once all the articles are collected, screen shots, graphics, and other items to be included with the article are obtained and layout begins. A general layout of where the articles will go is sketched out and the individual pages are created in basic form in *Calamus SL* from the sketched layouts. Any large changes are made and the layout is fancied up with borders and other style elements, adding them a page at a time. This continues until all the pages are made and refined, at which point proofs are made, which go through their own steps of approval.

At the same time, the cover is being made. We start off with examining the articles we have available and jot down different ideas of what may appear on the cover. After we narrow the list down, several versions of the cover text and picture layout are sketched on paper (some may be done quickly in the computer if the choice is close). After we choose the picture(s) that will appear on the cover, the cover is redesigned on the computer (again, using *Calamus SL*). The page is refined at this point, adding any extra elements or text, etc.

After the entire magazine, cover to cover, is finished and approved the pages are then imageset onto film (at full size) or printed in camera ready form (depending on available funds) for reproduction by the printer.

After the film/camera readies are given to the printers (Advanced Graphics of Tampa, FL), our job is mostly just to check on the progress and approve their proofs. Once we okay all of their prepress work, they do the actual printing and binding of the magazine.

When the printing is finished, the portion for subscribers and other individually mailed magazines are labeled and sorted by postal regulations and delivered to the post office for bulk mailing. The user group subscriptions are boxed and mailed, and most of the remaining magazines are freighted to distributors. Writers are sent copies of the magazine, and the leftovers are kept for archival and back issue purposes.

From the sales angle, things are quite unpredictable. There isn't any way to determine sales ahead of time, so we make the most catching cover we can to grab the attention of the people who breeze by the newsstand. We've also tried to create an attractive, active layout. However, the best kind of sales we can make are the various subscription plans we offer. It is not only less expensive to purchase the magazine that way, but the reader could also save on other items we will offer in the future.

Of course, the sale of advertising space is required (since it pays for a good portion of the costs) so we continuously make sure that our rates are adequate to cover our costs and also low enough to attract as many advertisers as possible (and with more advertisers, there are greater sales, which results in more computers being sold, which results in greater sales and at the same time increasing the magazine's circulation which results in a better looking larger magazine, and so on and so forth). Advertisers are a hard catch in any market, however, due to the competition between the various advertising media and the actual profits made by the advertisers.

Lou: Publishing certainly looks like a challenging occupation. You have my admiration. (So do you, Joe *grin*). Sean, what is your current involvement on GENie?

Sean: On GENie, we answer questions and make releases about *Processor Direct* magazine in Category 15, Topic 24, which we created just for that purpose. Releases are often placed in the file library in the RoundTable. Also, I read many topics (from the Falcon gossip topic, to the PhotoCD topic) and answer questions whenever possible while Timothy Miller covers some of the programming topics. We also actively support our registered users of TWS products in every way possible through both GEmail and the *DigiPlay Plus* and *ANSITerm* topics. One other thing we end up doing, that we never expected to do as much as we do, is answer questions via GEmail about everything from dropped STacys to which monitor should I get; but it certainly is fun.

Lou: Do you have an opinion about improving Atari's success in the computer industry?

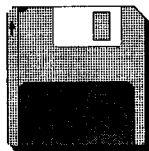
Sean: At the moment, Atari isn't gaining much momentum in the computer market, but the developers for the platforms are producing some of the most impressive software and hardware available. I have no doubt that, as more of it becomes available, the number of users will grow to the numbers that most Atari users anticipated.

Lou: Many thanks for taking the time to chat with us. Once again, how can you be reached?

Sean: On GENie, P-DIRECT for general information on subscriptions, advertising, and writing; P-DIRECT2 for article submissions.

Two Worlds Publishing, 3837 Northdale Blvd. #225, Tampa, FL 33624.

GENie ST Library by Larry Duke



At this writing, it's just prior to the 30,000th upload to the ST Library. The 30,000th upload—quite an achievement for the ST line, don't you think? Of course, this makes my job that much harder—more files to search through to include in this article. The hard drive on the TT/030 is stuffed with MEGABYTES of file lists from the library. To manipulate these lists, I am forever thankful for the *DevPac* TT assembler and the seemingly endless RAM in the TT/030. Without these two, I'd be completely lost.

I try not to focus on the recent uploads in this article. There are virtually hundreds or thousands of files that have been somewhat forgotten that deserve to be brought to light. Everybody sees the new files—it's those that are hidden in the dark recesses of the library that you may need to know about. Still, with some of the exceptional uploads lately, it's impossible to ignore the new files. Let's see what's in the bag of goodies today . . .

DAWN__E.ZIP file #29647 uploaded by GRMEYER

Have you ever seen *AFTER DARK*, the screen saver program for Windows? I must admit it's a nice program, and I

wanted a similar screen saver for the ST/TT. *WARP 9* with *EXTEND-O-SAVE* does a good job, but it just wasn't quite what I wanted. Enter *BEFORE DAWN*—the ultimate screen saver. Flying images, movies, jump to warp speed, and (my personal favorite) the searchlight on a darkened desktop are all included in this expandable, adaptable, and completely user definable shareware package. The searchlight is a circle of light that roams a darkened screen and only shows what's ACTUALLY on the desktop where the circle of light is. It's a real kick to see your *Calamus* document or desktop this way. Works on the TT/030 in all resolutions and the ST line, though some of the modules included do require 256 colors.

OPUS22.ARC file #11758 uploaded by D.S.HARRISON

You want a spread sheet program? Here's one that works great. There are numerous templates available in the library for taxes, etc. to go along with it.

FCALC25.LZH file #18542 uploaded by J.K.ANDREWS

An exceptional financial calculator for personal or business use. Determine payments, annuities, future values, and interest income to name a few. Loan amortization is well done also. Runs on the TT/030, but best in ST Medium or ST High Resolution.

CPXBASIC.LZH file #29646 uploaded by GRMEYER

Seems Gordon really knows how to find some jewels. This BASIC interpreter runs from *within* Atari's Extensible Control Panel. Write, edit, and debug your programs all within a desk accessory. I really can't say how useful it is, but it is kinda neat to be able to do that.

GMBNCH30.ZIP file #29594 uploaded by A.FASOLDT

For some reason, people are always trying to determine how their computer systems run against another one. This benchmark program will test your ST/TT/FALCON against some standards to determine how well your machine is working. Tests of the processor, memory, video, and drives show you where your computer stacks up against a set standard.

CHEETAH3.LZH file #16768 uploaded by FTWASHINGTON

For *fast* moves between partitions, check out this one! A great way to do backups with a SyQuest—moves ALL of your files from one partition to another.

MELT.ACC file #3823 uploaded by HTCOLONNA

Wanna see somebody flip? Install this on their hard drive, then call up the desk accessory when they aren't looking. The screen "melts" into an indeterminate pile of garbage. One click on the right mouse button brings it back. Good for a few laughs, anyway.

That's it for this edition. See you next month!

RTC Highlights

by Brian Harvey

Greetings to another month discussing the Atari Round Table Conferences (RTC)



on GENie! This month I will talk about four RTCs the first of which occurred on September 15, 1993. The **Gribnif Software/ Geneva RTC** had both Dan Wilga and Rick Flashman of Gribnif Software. The main topic of conversation was the new Multitasking Application Environment (Multitasking AES) called *Geneva*. This application allows any Atari to multitask unlimited GEM applications and load and unload unlimited desk accessories. Of course, it is dependent on free memory. It is a very convenient program to have. According to Gribnif, *Geneva* is non-preemptive, which means it won't interrupt an application that doesn't want to yield control. *Geneva* relies on what Dan called "cooperative multitasking" which is similar to *Microsoft Windows* or *MultiFinder*. Since it isn't preemptive, it means that the system slowdown is directly proportional to the number and complexity of the programs/accessories that you are running. The design behind *Geneva* was to create a multitasking system that did not suffer from the performance or design drawbacks of a full blown "preemptive" system. Therefore, *Geneva* is fast and it works with just about everything. However, since it includes all the system calls that *MultiTOS* has, you can run AES 4.0 applications without having to load MiNT. *Geneva* uses all of the 4.0 standard calls and a future version will be able to use MiNT.

Gribnif stated that *Geneva* is more compatible than *MultiTOS* and only needs a 512K system to work. At this small RAM memory it can run two to three average size programs (no desktop). In fact, it is the exception that a program doesn't work.

The seventh addition of Glendale occurred on the weekend of September 18-19, 1993 and, naturally, the Atari crowd from GENie was there. Also, a very special RTC straight from the floor of the show occurred on Saturday. **Glendale Live!** featured numerous GENie sysops and special guests Bob Brodie (Director of Communications for Atari Corp.), Ron Kovacs (Z*NET News) and John King Tarpinian. John King Tarpinian was the show organizer and all reports were extremely favorable. I always find it nice that not only do we get information about shows quickly on GENie but, in the case of a RTC like this one, the people are typing at us from the GENie booth while the show is actually occurring. Amazingly, they even had door prizes courtesy of Greg Kopchak at It's All Relative! Dave Shorr won *Photo Show* for the Falcon and Chris Cassaday won *It's All Relative*.

There was a multitude of information about the show, such as the Developers Conference, which was handled by Mike Fulton and Eric Smith. Also, Scott Sanders' new *Atari Compendium* was well received at the show. The *Atari Compendium* even mentioned a version of TOS, TOS 5.0. Naturally, someone wanted answers about this new TOS and Bob commented that this beta TOS version is restricted to developers only and since it is a beta version Bob felt it appropriate not to go into any details at this time.

The **October 1st Dateline Atari!** with Bob Brodie had a predominantly Jaguar focus, which is natural since it is THE machine that Atari is betting on. Bob cited that a host of people are really working hard to get the Jaguar's titles ready to send out the door for the big Jaguar roll out. The game titles

include *Raiden*, *Tiny Toons*, *Crescent Galaxy*, *Club Drive*, *Cybermorph*, and more. The rumor of the game bundled with the Jaguar will be *Crescent Galaxy*. However, others at Atari are trying to have *Cybermorph* be the bundled game.

It was made known by Bob that Atari has a very clear policy on mail orders of the Jaguar. They are not authorizing any mail orders for this year. They admit that the possibility exists that there may be a few units that do make it to the mail order arena but they are not promoting this option until 1994 since they are only planning on having 50,000 units by Christmas. The sad news is that the Jaguar will not be available for purchase in Canada until 1994. That is sad news for someone like me who is from Canada!

On September 29, 1993 we had the **Two Johns RTC!** Yep, John ("Hutch") Hutchinson of Fair Dinkum and John Trautschold of Missionware were the RT guests. The purpose of this RTC was to discuss Fair Dinkum products now being marketed by Missionware! Also, it was mentioned at the RTC that Missionware now has its own category in the Atari ST RT to help support their customers.

Hutch started out by explaining that he is not leaving the Atari community, rather wanting to devote more time to programming. He will continue to provide tech support, maintenance and product enhancements, but Missionware is now the exclusive distributor of Fair Dinkum products. All of Hutch's products will now be marketed under the Missionware label. Therefore, it is not the case of Hutch jumping ship but that the marketing got in the way of Hutch's programming. Hutch's main products are *Crossword Creator II*, *Word Search Creator*, *Puzzle Pack*, and *The Cryptographer*.

John commented that Missionware has also signed an agreement with the Rhea-FX boys to market *Cyberdrome* for them. Hutch was marketing this excellent game. Missionware is also working on the release of a second game called *Mecha-Naught*. It's being written by Doug Engel. This game has been shown in beta versions at a few shows this past summer and it has attracted interested users. *Mecha-Naught* is a maze game which is very addicting play-wise.

John went on and stated that they are working on a major upgrade for *Flash II*. The new version (2.2) should be released shortly, but John did not specify a specific date. This release will address the Falcon, the extra serial ports on the TT and Mega STE, some new script commands, new handshaking controls, new emulation stuff, and it has a Type Ahead history. Also, Version 2.3, is already being worked on and it WILL be multitasking! To me this is great news and I can't wait for 2.3. According to John, they are planning on an almost totally new program for 2.3. For example, both the terminal and editor/capture buffer windows can be opened at the same time. If you missed this RTC then you missed the chance to win a prize of your choice of Missionware products.

Brian will rejoin us in two months after his well deserved holiday to Scotland. We expect to have pictures of the Loch Ness monster for the Christmas column :-)

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We certainly hope that you can join us for what we're sure will be a good time. Jennifer, Ray, Dawn, Alex and I (Dave) thank you for your continued support and we look forward to seeing you again or meeting you for the very first time.



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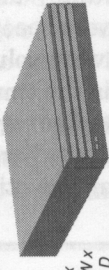
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1.2GB	10ms	Autopark	Seagate	\$1099	\$1169	\$1209
2.0GB	10ms	Autopark	Seagate	\$1699	\$1769	NA
2.4GB	11ms	Autopark	Fujitsu	\$2279	\$2349	NA
88/44MB	20ms	Removable	SyQuest	\$439	\$499	\$539
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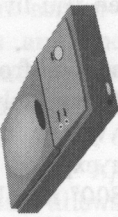
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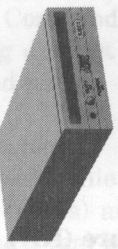
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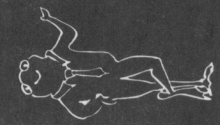
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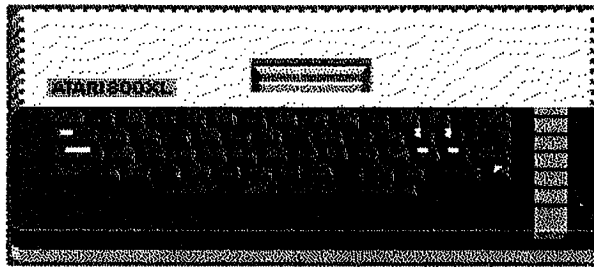
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8-Bit Tidbits

by
Rick Reaser



National Information Infrastructure (NII)

I've been here near the nation's capital for a little over 11 weeks now. I'm "over the hump" as far as my 20-week school goes. I've been checking out the local 8-bit "action" and some of the national political action as well. (It's hard not to do that when you live in this area.) More on this later.

No progress on the FidoNet connection front. I did get my Internet account though. Unfortunately, I don't have a way to access the computer where it resides. My temporary local access number expired the day before I got the account. And the "800" number they gave me doesn't work. To top things off, the mainframe needs vt-100. That means that *BobTerm* or *Express!* won't really cut it that well. I need to dig out a vt-100 emulator. My recollection is that all the 8-bit vt-100 programs are dogs. I'd appreciate any thoughts on the VT-100 side and will keep you posted. Next month, I'll reveal my Internet address, if I can get things to work.

As promised last month, I've continued my visits to local Atari vendors. Here's my Electronic Clinic report:

The Electronic Clinic

I knew I had arrived at the right place, when I saw the Atari Authorized Dealer and Service decals on the front door. There was also an unfaded cloth Atari banner hanging on the wall inside. (An *unfaded* Atari banner could become a collector's item some day.) The "sales floor" of the store is pretty small, but dominated by Atari 8-bit products. Behind the counter is a huge repair lab.

I met with the owner, Neil, who gave me the run down. The Electronic Clinic is principally an Electronics repair shop. Their main business is repair of VCRs and Stereos. They will also do some repairs of Atari 8-bit as well as ST items. The Clinic has been into Atari since 1982, but in the electronic repair business since 1969. The Electronic Clinic probably has the longest running advertisement in *Current Notes*. I remember seeing their ad back in 1983. Neil said he was going to update his ad soon, since he hasn't changed it for quite some time.

The store buys, sells and trades new and used hardware and software items. Neil overhauls the used hardware and resells it. In the store I saw Percom, In-

dus and Atari drives, a herd of vanilla 800s, and several Atari 1027 printers. He had a gazillion power supplies, including the rebuildable ones that Ben Poehland knows how to tweak, and those 1027 monsters. The stock turns over quite a bit, so it's best to write or call with specifics.

The most interesting thing in the store was an Intec Real Time Clock for the Atari 800. It plugs into one of the memory board slots and is accessed through Port A and B. This is the R-Time 8 granddaddy. It was something else.

The second most interesting thing was Ken Us-ton's Black Jack System hard cover book and software for the 8-bit. There were a couple of copies of that. The software helps you practice counting cards so that you can increase your odds of winning. It's a novel form of computer-aided learning. You may recall what a fuss this "counting system" caused in the casinos when it came out. Many were asked to leave the tables after becoming proficient—and Atari 8-bits were there.

Third most interesting things in the store were the several cases of CBS software's "Success With ____" series. At one time, the Maryland public schools were big into Ataris and used these programs in the classroom. I picked up a Math one and am going to head back for the rest of the set. It's not a fancy program, but it gets the job done when it comes to drilling and practice. Boy, are my kids going to love me when I boot this baby up for them.

There were quite a number of other things in the store, like *SAM*, Avalon Hill games, new Atari Cartridges, books, old magazines, *PrintShop* stuff, and numeric keyboards. Although there are a couple of ST things out, emphasis is clearly on the 8-bit end. For further information, please contact: The Electronic Clinic, 4916 Del Ray Ave, Bethesda, MD 20814. Phone: (301) 656-7983.

Plea for Writers and Photographers

I'm getting a little antsy about material for the next issue. There are several people out there working on things, but if you haven't volunteered to take your turn in the barrel, now is the time to step forward. We haven't had too many women writers on these pages. We are an "equal opportunity" organization in the truest sense of the word. I'm also still waiting for an 8-bit

photographer to step forward. An 8-bit woman photographer would be even better.

Elsewhere in This Issue

Joining us this month for the first time is Michael Current, who will show us a useful spreadsheet application for *SynCalc*. Michael has been a secondary school science teacher for 13 years. He started with a 600XL in 1984 with BASIC and *AtariWriter*. Now he owns three expanded memory XEs and one ST (which is never used). Michael is not new to the publishing world. His articles have appeared in the *Atari Interface Magazine*. Michael also developed and implemented an Atari-based computer curriculum, which was written up in the Summer 1991 issue of *Atari Explorer*. I'm very pleased he decided to write for us this month.

Next, that master of the Tag Line, that Hacker from the Northern Tier, Bill Mims, returns to these pages to answer that age old question, "Do I Need a Hard Drive?" It has come to my attention that several of you out there did not get hard drives when we ran our last series of articles. Hopefully, Bill will change your minds this time.

Finally, we have a piece from Switzerland, by Sacha Hofer about the state of Atari 8-bits in Europe. Sacha is a friend of Zoran Mitrovic who is on CompuServe. I decided not to edit Sacha's effort too heavily, so you can get the "European feel" of his writing. English is not Sacha's primary language.

Errata

In the September '93 CN, I incorrectly stated *Connect Magazine's* publishing frequency. It is bi-monthly. The masthead didn't say what months, though.

A few errors/anomalies crept into Frank Walter's "Magazine Type-In Listings" article.

In Listing 1, line 110 there should only be a single space between "ON" and "LINE".

In Listing 1, line 120 a "Control Character" didn't show up between the double quotation marks at the end of the line, so the typo code would give an error. Here's a new line 120.

YA 120 ? "DATA LINE ";LINE;CHR\$(28)

If you typed [CONTROL]_[-] between the two quotes in the original listing, the "ED" checksum would be correct.

In Listing 1, line 170, the semicolon before "END" should be a colon.

In Listing 3, line 90 there is another slight spacing problem. There should be a single space between DATA and each of the quotes like this. " DATA "

Best Products Clock Cartridge

The definitive word from Brad Koda is that the product is delayed at least until next year. Brad is go-

ing to have to straighten the matter out personally when he makes his trip to Europe. Brad also told me he bought a few more "good" pallets of stuff from Atari Corp and hopes to work that into the Rev. 10 catalog due out shortly. (He was proofing pages when I called him.)

GENie News

The GENie Thursday night Real Time Conferences (RTCs) are still going like gangbusters. It has become a real haven for *Current Notes* authors lately.

A big topic of conversation during a recent RTC was Darek Mihocka's *Gemulator 3.0*. If you look at the back cover of the September and October CNs, you will see a DOS 2.5 window inside a Microsoft Windows 3.1 screen—AWESOME! The September '93 CN had an announcement of the product on page 12, which most of you probably missed. (I did.) *Gemulator* is a hardware card and software that allows a PC to emulate an ST. *Gemulator* can now run an improved version of *ST Xformer*. *ST Xformer* is a program for STs that allows them to run 8-bit software. *ST Xformer* software is included with *Gemulator 3.0*. Not all 8-bit programs will work on the set up, but it's a fascinating concept.

Pretty soon, people will be buying 66 MHz 486 PC clones so they can run their favorite Atari 8-bit programs. (Really, it could happen.) Better yet, if someone were to write a PC emulator for the 8-bit, PCs could then run their own software. What a concept!

CompuServe News

We finally had a Sunday Night CO on CompuServe. For a few months, I thought the CO was about to die out totally. Jeff Potter and several of us discussed cable and connector options for *The Maze of AGDAgon*. Several people were going through hardware catalogs, looking at prices and providing ideas in real time. Neat! The *Maze* software is pretty much complete according to Jeff. All that is needed is the special cabling to hook the computers together. If more than three people play, line drivers are needed as well, which complicates the design. Essentially, you interconnect the SIO ports on the players. The interface is called *GameLink II*. You will recall *GameLink I*, which used the joystick ports. Rick Detlefsen is actually finishing up some new programs that use *GameLink I*. Several are already available on CompuServe. Hopefully, we'll see the *Maze* out soon with several options for the cabling, based on our CompuServe CO discussions.

The message area in the Atari 8-bit CompuServe Forum has really picked up. A lot of the traffic lately has involved ST owners and others rediscovering their 8-bit roots and wanting to set up things for their kids. A good computer never dies. Many of these rediscover-

ers are looking for good sources of educational software. That thought brings me to the next topic.

Sources List

My work on developing a definitive Atari sources database continues. The *Atari Classics* (AC) people have started to put together a list as well. I coordinated with AC when I started, but they didn't coordinate back when they started. Oh, well, worse things could happen. AC will publish their first list in their October '93 issue.

My intent is to merge the efforts, the lists and configuration control of my project with AC's so that there is just one list in the end. Right now there are differences between our lists in terms of information content and actual addresses. We've exchanged lists and are working out the differences. The biggest difference is that the official AC list does not provide a short description of source. Hopefully, we'll have this all worked out by next issue so we can get a verified list "on-line" soon.

I'm still looking for people to help verify sources. There are still a lot of places to check out, in spite of the fact that two groups are working on the project. Let me know if you are willing to help. I'd also love to hear your comments and suggestions about this project. What information do you want to see in the list? Is there a place we haven't shown thus far that you want us to verify? Give me some feedback!

Here's the second increment of the list we've been working on.

American Technavision (H/W S/W vendor), 15338 Inverness Street, San Leandro, CA 94579. Walk-In Sales: 1903 Fairway Drive, San Leandro, CA 94577. Phone: (510) 352-3787; (800) 551-9995 (orders only). Large selection of commercial software at excellent prices. Hardware replacement parts. Comprehensive catalog. VISA/MC. Owner: Ralph Maddox. Verified Sep '93-rlr.

[NOTE: Don't miss the special **Holiday SALE** that **American Techna Vision** is offering *Current Notes* readers. See their ad on **page 51** for some terrific half-price specials. Unfortunately, you'll have to cut out the coupon from your issue to take advantage, but it may really be worth it!]

Atari Classics (publisher), 179 Sproul Road/Rt 352 Frazer, PA19355-1958. Dedicated 8-bit magazine. Bi-monthly. Disk three times a year. Editor: Ben Poehland. Verified Sep '93-rlr.

B&C ComputerVisions (H/W S/W vendor), 2730 Scott Boulevard, Santa Clara, CA 95050. Phone: (408) 986-9960. Huge selection of software and hardware items. Comprehensive Catalog. VISA/MC. Verified Sep '93-rlr.

Best Electronics (H/W S/W vendor/developer), 2021 The Alameda, Suite 290, San Jose, CA 95126. Phones: Info (408) 243-6950; FAX (408) 243-8274. Enormous selection of piece parts and subassemblies. Stock hardware, software (foreign and Atari Corp). Several custom hardware products. Comprehensive catalog. Owner: Brian Koda. Verified Sep '93-rlr.

Computer Software Services (H/W S/W developer/vendor/repair), PO Box 17660, Rochester, NY 14617. Phones: Voice (716) 429-5639; FAX (716) 247-7158; BBS (716) 247-7157. Hardware and hardware upgrades, software, repair service. Comprehensive catalog. Owner: Bob Puff. Verified Sep '93-rlr.

Current Notes (publisher), 122 N. Johnson Road, Sterling, VA 20164. Phones: Voice (703) 450-4761; FAX (703) 430-2618. Supporting both 8-bit and ST. Glossy cover. 10 issues/yr. VISA/MC phone subscriptions accepted. Publisher: Joe Waters. Verified Sep '93-rlr.

Dean Garraghty (S/W developer/vendor/publisher), 62 Thomson Ave., Balby, Doncaster, United Kingdom DN4 0NU. US Distributor: Lance Tattman, 844 Kern Street, Richmond, CA 94805. DigiStudio digitized music player, PD library, disk based newsletter. Verified Sep '93-rlr.

Dorsett Educational Systems, 408 Mission Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010. Phones: Message (800) 654-3871; FAX (805) 484-3327; Voice (805) 654-3871. Educational Software using the tape drive and cartridge. 64 courses. Owner: Dave Peterson. Verified Apr '93-rlr.

Gralin International (H/W S/W vendor), 11 Shillito Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset BH12 2BN, United Kingdom. Commercial software/hardware. Midi and digital sampling software. Verified Dec '92-rlr.

ICD, Inc. (vendor/repair), 1220 Rock St., Rockford, IL 61101-1437. Phone: (815) 968-2228. Cables and some manuals available for their products. Will still do some repairs (e.g. R-Time 8 cartridges.) Verified May '93-rlr.

KD (Kinetic Design) Hamsoft PD Software (S/W vendor), P.O. Box 1646, Orange Park, FL 32067-1646. Markets a selection of PD software in most categories. Ham radio, slow scan TV, music, and graphics. Verified Apr '93-rd.

Lex-Tronics/DataQue (H/W S/W developer/vendor), 1623 West Fourth Street, Mansfield, OH 44906-1701. Phones: Voice/Fax (419) 529-9797 1pm-5pm M-F. GENie: dataque.1. Transkey keyboard adapter, 6502/65816 assemblers and PC cross-assemblers, blank EPROM cartridges, and a 9 disk-side 8-bit survival kit. Owner: Chuck Steinman. Visa/MC/Discover. Verified Sep '93-rlr.

New Atari User (S/W vendor/publisher), P.O. Box 54 Stafford, ST16 1DR, United Kingdom. Glossy British magazine. Mainly 8-bit, some ST articles. Also of-

fers Commercial/PD software selection under the name "Page 6." Verified Sep '93-rlr.

Newell Industries (H/W S/W developer/vendor), P.O. Box 253, Wylie, TX 75098. Phones: Voice (214) 442-6612; BBS (214) 442-2584. Hardware upgrades, memory expansions, alternative OS's, 80 column wordprocessor, business programs. Owner: Wes Newell Verified 6/93-rlr.

Information Super Highways News

I took my own advice and started to monitor the White House areas on GENie and CompuServe to keep tabs on the Information Super Highways situation. Both services have bulletin board areas and libraries for White House Technology issues. I downloaded a bunch of stuff (news releases, Presidential Orders, congressional testimony and reports), which I have reorganized and massaged into this short column. No paper was involved in putting this together. I merely plucked the information off the "Highway." (There were surprisingly few software "road apples!") Enough material is available on-line to write several feature articles on this, but I don't have time to do that right now. Let me hit the high points.

First, the *official* name is the National Information Infrastructure (NII) not Information Super Highways. It's sort of like Star Wars was the nickname for Strategic Defense Initiative. Insiders use the term NII.

So what is the NII and why is the government involved? The NII consists of computers, computer data banks, fax machines, telephones, and video displays linked by high-speed telecommunication links capable of transmitting billions of bits of information in a second. You've seen the Apple Commercials for the Newton, which Tom Selleck narrates? You've got the idea. The Clinton Administration believes that the Federal government has several important roles to play in assisting the development of this infrastructure, which will be built and run primarily by the private sector. The idea is to encourage and complement commercial efforts through tax policies, government spending programs and regulation. (Mmmm!!) The nine eloquent reasons sort of boiled down to those three things. (Sorry about that, Mr. Vice President.)

In February of this year, the President and Vice President unveiled a Technology Initiative, which outlined a five part Administration strategy for building the NII:

- 1) Implement the High-Performance Computing and Communications (HPCC) Program.
- 2) Work with industry, universities, and Federal labs to develop technologies needed to effectively use the NII.
- 3) Provide funding for networking pilot projects.

4) Promote dissemination of Federal information.

5) Reform telecommunications policies.

Interestingly enough, I was illustrating points 2, 3 and 4 when I discussed the Blacksburg project, Fed-World and the CompuServe and GENie areas in the September '93 CN.

The brainchild for the NII is Vice President Gore. He started working on this kind of stuff back when he was a Senator. In fact, a bill that is a follow-on to one he introduced as a Senator is now being considered by this Congress to "kick off" the effort. This bill is called the "High Performance Computing and High Speed Networking Applications Act of 1993." The bill is directly related to item 1, HPCC, in the five part strategy.

The distinguishing features of HPCC are its objectives of fostering development of a computer that has one trillion operations per second (teraflops) performance and to solve "Grand Challenges" such as accurate weather prediction through complex software teamed with powerful hardware.

The point man for the overall NII effort is the Secretary of Commerce. (Yes, Ron Brown, the former Democratic National Committee Chairman.) In September, the President established a private sector "United States Advisory Council on the National Information Infrastructure" for the Department of Commerce. In addition to providing advice to the Commerce Secretary on the whole NII area, a principle job of this council will be to recommend changes to reform those telecommunications policies in support of item 5 in the overall strategy. According to the Executive Order that created the Council, the members don't get paid. There is also a companion government Information Infrastructure Task Force (IITF) consisting of High-Level Government Guys (HLGGs) chaired by Secretary Brown.

Actually, I'm pretty excited about all this. I've only scratched the surface of it, but will keep you updated as things progress. It is good news for us 8-biters and computer owners in general. All indications are that your 65/130/600/800/1200/XL/XE will be able to plug into this baby. A real danger, as you can see from the above, is that the NII could become over bureaucratized. Now that you know some of the basics of NII, I will provide you specific tidbits of the details in future columns. It's really fascinating. Everything about NII is available on-line and you can interact directly with the principles via e-mail. More on this next month.

That's all for now. You can contact me via the snail mail or e-mail addresses at the front of the magazine.



"Do I Need a Hard Drive?"

That Eternal 8-bit Question

by Bill Mims

When I got my first 8-bit system some years ago, I started with a tape drive and an older vanilla 800. Over time, I've "procured" floppy drives and, eventually, a hard drive. When I got my hard drive, many other computer users asked the infamous question, "Why?" Well, I have to admit they had a point. But, I quickly countered with "Why Not!"

After looking at the price of some of the computer systems now on the market, the thought of buying a computer that costs as much as a car makes me shudder. True, I paid a pretty penny for the drive setup over the years, but now I've spent just as much for floppy disks.

Taking the Plunge

I got my drive setup from Bob Puff's Computer Software Services. At first, I was as lost as going from a tape drive to floppy setup. But, Bob Puff offered outstanding support and assistance and soon I was fully up to speed. There is some software that cannot be used on the hard drive, but for the software that is installed on the hard drive, it is a dream.

Advantages

With the hard drive, I went from loading programs that took up to two minutes to just seconds. It really blew me away at first. Downloading problems were now over. With the drive space and speed, I no longer worry about error 162. File storage is only limited by the size drive you have. In my case, I found 42 meg to be quite enough. I still have enough space to run a Bulletin Board System (BBS) if I want to. Downloading from other BBSs is much faster. A hard drive spins about 3,000 rpm in comparison to around 300 rpm for a floppy. This makes writing to disk during downloads much faster. With all this space and speed, programs that took more than one floppy can be put on the hard disk and run from one subdirectory.

A lot depends on the Disk Operating System (DOS) used. I strictly use *MYDOS 4.5*. No offense to *SpartaDOS*, I just don't care for it. With *MYDOS* you can split the drive into 16 MB (or smaller) partitions. This means you can create several "physical" drives as needed. (A 42 MB hard drive, for example, can be configured as three 14 MB partitions.) I have mine set up as utilities on one drive, word processors on another, and data bases on still a third drive.

Subdirectories

When I first got my hard drive, one very new thing came to light very quickly—subdirectories. Subdirectory capability on a hard drive with *MYDOS* is very good. Sure, you can have subdirectories with *MYDOS* on floppies, but you can see the real power of this with a hard drive. While *MYDOS* limits you to 64 files to a directory or subdirectory, you can still show two or three directories and actually have hundreds of files on the drive. *MYDOS* will allow you to default to a certain drive and sub-directory at the same time. You can have *BobTerm* installed in one subdirectory, default to that directory, load it, and run it from that directory and it will be just like you were in the main directory. Using *BobTerm*, *MYDOS* and a hard drive for downloading and uploading software to and from a BBS also has advantages. With *Bobterm* on one subdirectory, I download to another subdirectory, and upload from yet a third subdirectory.

More Advantages

Another advantage I found with subdirectories was in handling off-line messaging. [Editor's Note: See Bill's article on *PabQWK* in the March '93 *CN* or Bobby Clark's article on *QWKSilver* in the February '93 *CN* for further information on offline messaging.—RR] Most of my .QWK packets run between 40K to 200K bytes. With this in mind, I set aside one directory just for .QWK packets. I have other subdirectories set aside for individual BBSs. And I have my unARCing program in yet another directory. After downloading, I run the unARCing program from the proper directory. Then I unARC the .QWK packet from one directory into the directory set up for that BBS. Confused yet? Well basically, it's just like taking it from one disk and putting it on another disk, except you're not using floppies, and your space isn't as limited.

All this sound interesting? Well, there's a lot more. Let's say you like GIFs (Graphics Interchange Format pictures). You just don't have the space for them on floppy disk. With a hard drive and Jeff Potter's *APAC*, it's easy to store, retrieve and view them. I don't have very many GIFs, but the ones I do have, I enjoy. Some GIFs can be over 200K bytes in size and just don't fit on a floppy. With a hard drive, you just don't have the space problems frequently encountered with floppies.

Getting back to the infamous question of "Why?" For me, the advantages clearly outweighed the disadvantage, which turns out to be cost. That's why I quickly chose to own a hard drive.

Hooking 'er Up

When I got my hard drive, I read the instructions very carefully. I went the Black Box route. The instructions were quite detailed and the diagrams very good. I started hooking up my new hard drive to the XE by first installing the cables. There were four main cables involved. The 50-pin cable for the drive itself, the printer interface cable, the modem cable, and the power cable. There are no special tools required, so installing was a snap.

The 50-pin hard drive cable in my hard drive case was already connected to the controller card. All I had to do was match number 1 pin on the Black Box and cable. I simply pressed the cable into the socket. The printer and modem connections to the Black Box were equally simple.

The last connection, power, was a little different. It is a smaller connector and some attention to detail is required. On mine, I had to ensure the stripped edge of the connector was pointed up.

Next came plugging the Black Box into the computer. With an 800XL, CSS provides another cable that goes from a connector on top of the Black Box to the 800XL. The 800XL has a cover for the Parallel Bus Interface (PBI). Remove that cover *carefully* and plug the Black Box cable into the PBI port. You are almost ready to start. On a 130XE, all you have to do is simply plug it into the card edge connectors on the back of the computer. Once the Black Box is connected, you can plug in the monitor, computer power supply, and floppy drives.

Once everything is connected, *verify* your connections. It has been my personal experience that 99% of hard drive problems are from cables not connected right. Next, plug in the Black Box power supply. If your power connection is right on the Black Box, the green light will come on. If not, unplug and reconnect.

Now comes the fun and games part. Once everything checks out, boot the Black Box utilities disk that came with the Black Box. On it, there will be a variety of utilities. The first one you need is *hdfmt.com*. This will low level format the hard drive. It will prompt you for DOS type, type of controller and several other pieces of information. Make sure the information you provide *hdfmt.com* is correct or all you get is errors. Start formatting and go have lunch or whatever. This takes a while. After formatting the hard drive, the program will automatically do a sector verify. It's the longest part of the process. After formatting, the program will give a total number of good and bad sectors on your hard drive. *Write*

these numbers down!!! You will need the number of good sectors later.

Next, you partition the drive. The instructions tell how. Here is where the total number of sectors comes into play. Remember that number? Well, when you partition the drive, the program will ask you for total number of sectors on that particular drive. This is very important. Keep track of this number. Next, you need to format each and every directory. The program to do this is on the floppy and called *dirfmt.com*. This will prepare each partition for files. Files can now be put on the hard drive along with subdirectories.

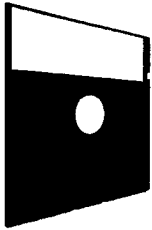
Was all that worth it? I say, "YES!" A person who does not have a hard drive can only imagine how wonderful having one is. The person with a hard drive can sit back and say, "I told you so." Hard drives do hiccup occasionally, so always make a backup copy of the files on the hard drive just in case. Several programs to help you do this are available. The only one for MyDOS-configured hard drives is CSS's *HD Backup Pro!*, which I reviewed in the May '93 issue of *Current Notes*. 8-bit backup programs were also the subject of an article by John Sandgren in the Jul/Aug '93 *CN* as well. One other thing, if you have files that have been compressed using Bob Puff's *Disk Communicator*, NEVER uncompress to the hard drive. It will wipe out your files. I found out the hard way. [Editor's Note: So have I . . . on several occasions.—RR]

More on the Black Box

Just a few more words about the Black Box. It has two toggle switches on it. These two switches are very important. The left one, if turned on, will not let you write to the hard drive. That's nice, when you don't know what a certain file will wipe out. The right one will let you switch from text to graphics mode for the printer. The two red push button switches are for doing a screen dump to printer, and for the Black Box menu.

The Black Box menu is the heart of your Black Box. When you press the button a screen with three options appears. Selecting "A" will give you another Menu and a variety of options on this menu. The menu is for the partition of the drive, size, and selecting the hard drive, or floppy drives. Selecting "B" will give you yet another menu with port status. This is important and you really need to read the documentation on this part. Hitting "C" gives you a status on the 6502 chip. From here you can edit sectors, for just an example. I must admit I really don't know a lot of the mechanics, I just know it works darn good! Hitting ESC at any time removes you from where you were back to the program you were in. Oh did I forget to mention that? Well when using the Black Box, if you want to exit the program at any time to change a

Continued on page 50.



Stock Analysis Spreadsheet Application

Monitoring the Market with Your 8-bit

by Michael Bennett

First Exposure

When I first bought a computer, my main goal was to write a program that could average the grades of my students. Later, I discovered spreadsheet programs and, except for the experience I gained, all that earlier work went out of the window. Now the spreadsheet program figures my students' grades.

Spreadsheet programs are wonderful for what they do. Those of you who have had to use them already know this. They are fantastic for "number crunching" and keeping track of any kind of numerical information. Numbers can have any of the four basic arithmetic operations performed on them plus a host of other types of calculations.

The first spreadsheet program I used was *SpeedCalc* from *Compute! Magazine*. It was a nice program, especially for a magazine "freebie," but it didn't have a lot of bells and whistles. The next spreadsheet program I tried was *SynCalc*. *SynCalc* is the premiere Atari 8-bit spreadsheet program with more extra features than most folks would ever dream of using. I remember taking a class in IBM computer literacy in which we spent several hours learning *Lotus 1-2-3*. Maybe it was an early version of *Lotus* or something, but there were a couple of things it wouldn't do that *SynCalc* did with ease! That really solidified my satisfaction with *SynCalc*.

Writing for Profit

A fellow 8-bitter approached me awhile back about writing a spreadsheet application for a friend of his who wanted to track the success of the stocks he owned. After determining exactly what he wanted the program to do, I wrote a generalized template that he could modify for his particular stock holdings. Evidently he was pleased with the results, because he even offered a donation for my efforts. That kind of thing doesn't happen very often, so I got to thinking that perhaps others would benefit from this type of spreadsheet application, too.

This will not be a tutorial about how to use spreadsheet programs. We will assume that you have a working knowledge of how spreadsheets are supposed to work. If you are experienced in using a spreadsheet, you will be able to read this and understand it right away. If you have a spreadsheet program, but are not familiar with its workings, you could work your way through this article with your spreadsheet program booted and the instruction manual nearby

and hopefully be able to master some rudimentary techniques of spreadsheet design. Finally, if you have never used a spreadsheet program on your Atari, I hope that by reading this article you will realize even more what your computer is capable of doing for you.

Some terminology may need clarification at the outset. A stock portfolio is the collection of stocks that a stockholder owns. A spreadsheet template is a skeletal structure of columns, rows, headings, and formulas that are entered into and saved by the spreadsheet program itself. Once a template is created, a minimal amount of data is entered and used for analysis by the spreadsheet. Templates are designed so that the layout and formulas are the same each time the file is loaded into the spreadsheet, but the data is free to be changed and updated.

Creating a Spreadsheet Template

The first step in creating any spreadsheet application is to clearly define what you want it to do. We wanted this one to accept entries of stock names, their prices per share, commission fees, and the current market value per share. These are all things that go into the cost of doing business in the stock market. In return, we wanted it to show us each stock's total market value, each stock's percentage performance, and the total value and performance of the entire portfolio. This type of information would indicate how well each stock was doing as well as the whole group's performance.

In addition, we wanted to make the template itself very user friendly. We didn't want the user to be confused by the layout. Instead, sections of the template needed to be clearly delineated and defined. This required an input section for current stock values and a results section to show an analysis of how they were doing. Depending on the spreadsheet program being used, the results section could even be locked so that entries could not be changed accidentally.

The Template

Examine the first spreadsheet template that accompanies this article. You'll notice that it clearly delineates the input section and the results section. The input section lists the stocks in the portfolio and their current market values. The results section contains what was paid for the stocks, the commissions, and all the analysis data. When the template is used, the

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	
1	STOCK PORTFOLIO SPREADSHEET								
2									
3	-----								
4	INPUT SECTION								
5									
6		Today's							
7		Value							
8	Stock	Per Share							
9	-----								
10	AAA Inc.	\$22.10							
11	BBB Etc.	\$8.75							
12	CCC Ltd.	\$36.50							
13	DDD Inc.	\$14.00							
14	-----								
15						Today's	Amount	Percent	
16						Total	Gain/	Gain/	
17	Stock	Shares	Price	Amount	Comm.	Paid	Total	Loss	
18			Paid				Value	Loss	
18	-----								
19	AAA Inc.	100	\$21.20	\$2,120.00	\$12.72	\$2,132.72	\$2,210.00	\$77.28	3.6%
20	BBB Etc.	55	\$9.00	\$495.00	\$10.00	\$505.00	\$481.25	-\$23.75	-4.7%
21	CCC Ltd.	200	\$36.25	\$7,250.00	\$58.00	\$7,308.00	\$7,300.00	-\$8.00	-0.1%
22	DDD Inc.	75	\$12.20	\$915.00	\$10.00	\$925.00	\$1,050.00	\$125.00	13.5%
23	-----								
24	RESULTS SECTION								
25			OVERALL TOTALS			\$10,870.72	\$11,041.25	\$170.53	1.6%

Figure 1. Stock Portfolio Template

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	STOCK PORTFOLIO SPREADSHEET							
2								
3	-----							
4	INPUT SECTION							
5								
6		Today's						
7		Value						
8	Stock	Per Share						
9	-----							
10	AAA Inc.	\$22.10						
11	BBB Etc.	\$8.75						
12	CCC Ltd.	\$36.50						
13	DDD Inc.	\$14.00						
14	-----							
15						Today's	Amount	Percent
16						Total	Gain/	Gain/
17	Stock	Shares	Price	Amount	Comm.	Paid	Total	Loss
18			Paid				Value	Loss
18	-----							
19	AAA Inc.	100	\$21.20	B19*C19	\$12.72	D19+E19	B19*B10	G19-F19 (G19-F19)/F19
20	BBB Etc.	55	\$9.00	B20*C20	\$10.00	D20+E20	B20*B11	G20-F20 (G20-F20)/F20
21	CCC Ltd.	200	\$36.25	B21*C21	\$58.00	D21+E21	B21*B12	G21-F21 (G21-F21)/F21
22	DDD Inc.	75	\$12.20	B22*C22	\$10.00	D22+E22	B22*B13	G22-F22 (G22-F22)/F22
23	-----							
24	RESULTS SECTION							
25	OVERALL TOTALS				SUMF19:F22	SUMG19:G22	G25-F25	(G25-F25)/F25

Figure 2. Stock Portfolio with Formulas

current market value of each stock is changed accordingly and the spreadsheet calculates the rest. All you have to do is print out the report and examine the results. Of course, the program will not tell you which stocks to get rid of or what stocks to buy, but it will clearly show how the existing stocks are performing and how each one is influencing your entire portfolio.

When the template is first set up, some data will need to be entered into the results section. The number of shares of each stock, the prices paid per share, and the commissions paid per stock will all have to be keyed in. Only as stocks are sold or bought will this data need to be altered. The remainder of the results section is a series of formulas to calculate the analyses.

The Brains of the Thing

The heart of this application is the set of formulas that analyze the stock data. The second template shows the various formulas, in their appropriate cells, that perform the analysis tasks. Since the user inputs are minimal, it is recommended that auto-calculation be enabled. By doing this, you won't have to remember to force a recalculation each time you use the application.

One further feature that was not included, but which could easily be added, is a column to show what percentage of the entire value of the portfolio each stock comprises. Entrepreneurs generally recommend that investors' portfolios be divided among different types of stocks by percentages. For example, a stock purchaser may want to limit his holdings of mutual fund stocks to 30% of his entire portfolio. By adding a results column that calculated this factor, a quick glance would be enough to show if you are within the parameters you have set for yourself in this area.

Formatting the Cells

To make the template aesthetically pleasing as well as easy to examine, cells need to be justified properly. With a spreadsheet such as *SpeedCalc* where functionality is the axiom, formatting cells with right or left justification and zero, one, or two decimal places is about as complicated as it gets. *SynCalc*, however, takes formatting to new heights. In addition to standard justification and decimal places, dollar signs can be added to cell outputs. Commas can also be provided for numbers of one-thousand and greater. The percent format is also used in this template in the last column.

Some of these formatting features may seem to clutter the output, but they may easily be altered to suit your own tastes. For example, dollar formatting may be enabled for only the top cell in each column that reports money amounts. Changing it this way

would produce an output for columns D and E (starting at row 17) that would look like this:

	D	E
	Amount	Comm.
17		
18	-----	-----
19	\$2,128.88	\$12.72
20	495.88	18.88
21	7,258.88	58.88
22	915.88	18.88
23	-----	-----

As you can see, dollars are clearly indicated for these figures, but without printing a dollar sign every time.

Here are the formats used with the various cells in this template:

These cells can be formatted for a precision of two (and for dollars and commas, if desired): B10-B13 and columns C, D, E, F, G, and H.

Cells B19-B22 should be formatted for a precision of zero.

Column I should be formatted for a precision of one and for percent.

A Profitable Venture

If you have never delved into using spreadsheet programs, I hope this article has shown that they can not only be useful, but fun to use. And if you are an old hand with spreadsheets, perhaps this has rekindled your interest or stirred your creativity to produce something of your own. If so, I'm sure we'd all like to hear about it. Let's all share in the wealth of our combined knowledge and take our Atari's to the limits of our imagination.

Do I Need a Hard Drive?

(Continued from page 47.)

drive number, just hit the button. After you're done with the Black Box menu, you can go right back to where you were—without having to reload the original program.

Bob Puff and CSS have put a lot of effort into developing this excellent peripheral. Thanks, Bob, for the Black Box and all the technical assistance!

Summary

I've found my Black Box/Hard Drive combination indispensable—especially in the telecommunications area. The speed and ease of communications with BBSs with a hard drive is unbelievable. Do you need a hard drive? I think so.

Today's Tagline: Need some snow? Send a SASE to: Minot, North Dakota. Season irrelevant!



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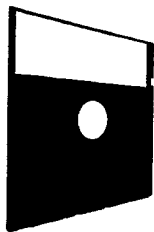
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European Atari 8-bit Report

Europe from a European

by Sacha Hofer (Switzerland)

Do you want to know something about the Atari 8-bit computer in the good old Europe? Yes? Then read on. Or else!!!!

First something about me. A big hello to all Atari friends in the States! Excuse me for my English, but I could not write this article in German, Italian or French because you would just not understand it! But if you want...

OK, now let's talk about me. I am 21 and I am studying computer science at the University of Bern. I have been a big Atari fan for several years. I began with an Atari 800XL, then I bought a VCS 2600. In 1988 I became a happy owner of an Atari 520STFM. In 1991 I bought a little console named Lynx. Finally, I bought an Atari 1040ST.

I am also very interested in the Falcon and I hope that Atari will finally do good things with this machine. My favorite computer is my big little 800XL. It is not simple to say why. It is so, and it will ever be.

OK, let's now begin writing about 8-bit in Europe. Ah! Just a little information. You are just reading an article by one of the last two Atari 8-bit users from Switzerland. Sad to say this, but it is so. I hope there are more here someday!!

The situation here is not bad, but it is important to know where you can find something. In Germany, England, Holland and in Poland you can find a good number of 8-bit users. I do not know much of the users in Poland, but you can get very good programs from this country. So, if you find something from Poland, just get it! I have many demos from there and some games. The actual games from Poland are *Operation Blood* (an *Operation Wolf* clone, very good), the *Curse* (an adventure with no text, only graphics and sound) and *Adax* (Mission 2). Some warning also for software from Poland. Poland has many games that are more a demo than a game. Holland has ANG Software. They do very much for the 8-bit. They have also a Diskmag in English. You can find interesting software there. I am sorry, but I can not just say much more. There are several clubs in Holland, too. If you want to know more about Holland you should ask some Dutch users.

In England there is the *New Atari User*--a very good magazine. Ed Hall has written about *New Atari User* in the Jan/Feb '93 issue of *Current Notes*. I can just confirm what he has written. There are also some good programmers everywhere in that country.

A famous disk magazine is the *Excel* from Robert Stuart from Scotland. There are also some budget software labels like Zeppelin and Byte Back who produce(-ed??) some excellent programs.

Now, interesting news from Germany. First, there is the ABBUC, the biggest 8-bit club, with more than 800 active us-

ers. (One of them is writing here.) ABBUC is short for Atari Bit Byter User Club. The club has a big PD library and much more. An important person in Germany is Klaus Peters because he has some interesting hardware, like the floppy 2000. Very important are also Power Per Post (PPP), KE Soft, and the AMC. These are principally software dealers. They also produce new software. An example is *Brundles*, a *Lemmings* clone (should be out the 1st of November this year from KE Soft).

New programs are also available from the ABBUC. KE Soft and PPP publish two Atari 8-Bit magazines, called *ZONG* and *Atari Magazin*. These magazines appear every two months and have about 100 pages. They are very important for the German speaking users.

An interesting thing is also the Computer Flohmarkt. The Computer Flohmarkt (CF) is a 200-pages big "newspaper" where you can put your adverts. You can find things practically for every computer, from the Texas TI99/4a to the Mac. In the CF, every user can talk with others about his system. The Atari 8-bit corner is very interesting. It has many dedicated users who talk about news, problems, software or need simply some help. I think that it is a good system for lonely users who want to contact someone.

Contacts are very important for the 8-bit Atari. It is the only way to survive. You see that the Atari 8-bit users are a strong community. It is certainly also interesting to know something about some "normal" things in the life of an Atari 8-bit user. I begin with the programming languages.

The most used language is not Basic but *TurboBASIC* from Frank Ostrowsky. It is a very powerful Basic. The language is seven times faster than normal Basic and has some important routines. Most of the German programs are written in this language. It may be interesting for some ST users that *TurboBASIC* is the predecessor of *GFA Basic*.

A new very fast language written by Harald Schoenfeld is *QUICK*. Only assembler is faster. The language is similar to Pascal and C. I think that in the future many new programs will be written with this language.

The next step is the hardware. Most users have a disk drive, but there is still a little minority who work with cassette drives. In the former DDR, a turbo cassette drive has been developed. The system works fast, but it is no longer interesting.

Many people have a printer. There are already many people (me, too) who have an Atari 1027 or 1029 printer, but the majority have an Epson-compatible printer. Some users use also a mouse. There are some programs that have been written for the mouse. An example is S.A.M. (Screen Aided Manager) from PPP.

An interesting aspect is surely the know how from the users. I think that the know how is very high. There are many little experts. The 8-bit users know all the basic things and information about their systems. The 8-bit user knows what he has. For us, it is also important to get some older programs. Sometimes, some dealers have bought some programs even from the USA. These programs are generally sold out very quickly. Personally, I buy all the good programs that I do not have (just so long as I do not give out all my money after a few days. I have to remember that this is not my only computer system that eats and eats money for breakfast ... slurp!).

OK, so far about details. Now I will tell you something about hardware here on the continent. I was just wondering about Ed Hall as he wrote about the 800 XE computer. I can only say that this computer is the same as the 65 XE. On the continent, the XEs were ever called 130 and 800 XE. Just ask Atari why. 1450 XL/D has never been here. I have some photos of this machine, that is all! It may be interesting to know that Atari actually started late to sell the good old 400/800 here in Europe. They began seriously in 1982. I will stop here because I did not want to begin with a long Atari story.

Let's move to the DOS. The standard DOS is 2.5. Actually, everyone uses a compatible version such as *MyDOS* or *Turbo DOS*. This "multidos" is very interesting and is prob-

ably a specialty of Atari (just do not forget the TOS versions on the ST).

Atari Messe in Duesseldorf. Actually KE Soft, AMC, . . . decided to come to the Atari Messe in 1991. It was a good time (I personally was there) and so most of them decided to come back in 1992. 1992 was also very successful. For 1993 it is practically certain that the Atari Messe will not be halted. So KE Soft decided to launch an Atari 8-bit only show the 21.08 in Hanau in Germany. Maybe some of you will be there. At the moment, it is raining and I just do not have more things to say. If you are interested, I will write something about the ST and the Lynx in one of the next issues. It is not a problem (just how this famous alien says). I will also answer your questions. I am also very interested in pen pals (you should just have an Atari) and so I can only say: write! (maybe sometime you must wait for a while because I am very busy, but I will certainly answer!). My address is:

Sacha Hofer

via ca di ferro 7

Minusio, Switzerland CH-6648

You need also a stamp and then your letter will just come right to me (hopefully. . .). OK, see you and have a good time with your Atari computer!! Bye Bye

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Pyramid Mouse Master!

The Absolute Solution to an Age Old Problem

Review by Ronald Hall

Quick! . . . List your top 10 reasons why Atari has their mouse and joystick ports underneath their computers. Recently, I took a poll of the Atari owners in my area and this is what we came up with:

- 1) Atari owners weren't considered coordinated so Atari put the ports under the keyboard to improve manual dexterity.
- 2) Ancient Egyptian curse on all things Fuji.
- 3) The design actually came from an Atari engineer who was secretly on Commodore's payroll.
- 4) It gives current Falcon owners something to look forward to when a new case comes out. (yeah, right)
- 5) The design was meant to wear out the mouse because we all know how mice multiply and Atari couldn't figure out what to do with them all.
- 6) Atari wanted to show what a consistent company they are. (HMMMMMMMM...)
- 7) In older ST's, lifting and dropping the computer when changing the mouse/joystick helps seat all those chips that keep popping out.
- 8) Atari put the mouse/joystick ports under the keyboard to avoid charges of indecent exposure. No one can see the tail of the mouse inserted into the computer without lifting it up.
- 9) The design team calculated that if there was even one more port on the outside of the case so much signal would leak out that the FCC would require them to apply for a radio station license, call letters KTOS. (or WGEM, take your pick!)
- 10) Atari was hoping for a guest shot on "World's Greatest Unsolved Mysteries" to increase national exposure.

I had to stop here because it was starting to look too much like a David Letterman top ten list.

Needless to say, there has been a lot of speculation about the under-the-keyboard port placement. Over the years, there have also been several solutions that attempted to amend the problem, with varying degrees of success.

Extend-O-Matic

When I first switched from my trusty Atari 520 ST to a 1040 ST, I was amazed at the location of the mouse/joystick ports. Solution number one was to purchase a set of mouse/joystick extension cables. This worked, bringing the connections out from underneath the keyboard. The only problem was that to use two joysticks you still had to do the titanium two-step to change the mouse connector to a joystick. A few years later, I upgraded to a 1040 STe (I never made it to a Mega ST) but alas, the problem still existed. The STe did add two new analog joystick ports in a much improved position on the left side of the case, although users haven't seen much support for these yet. I say yet because I hear rumors that the controller for the Jaguar will also work with these analog ports on both the Falcon 030 and the STe.

A Better Mouse Trap

About the time that I got my STe, I also discovered the **Mouse Master** from Practical solutions. This great little add-on device plugs into both ports underneath the keyboard and brings the mouse/joystick connections out to a small box where your mouse and two joysticks can plug into it. A small rocker type switch on top of the box allows you to choose between your mouse or a second joystick. Here was an even better solution! There were, however, still a few problems. First, the box tended to hang over the edge at the back of my desk, so I had to stretch around several obstacles that were in the way. A friend of mine once said that I looked like I was going through birth again while doing this. Second, it seemed that the rat's nest of cables behind and beside my computer had grown again.

Enter Micro R & D

Recently, I purchased some printer ribbons from Tenex, Inc. While I was thumbing through their catalog, I noticed that they supported Commodore computers (what's the name of their computer, something to do with "friend," wasn't it?). Anyway, I noticed this product from Micro R & D called the **Pyramid Mouse Master**. The description in the catalog said that you installed both a mouse and a joystick simultaneously and then it only took a click of the mouse or fire button on the joystick to activate the desired device. I figured that since Atari and Commodore

computers can interchange joysticks, then this device should work on my Atari. I placed my order and received it just a few days later. Upon examination, I found a label on the unit stating that it worked with Atari/Amiga computers (*that's the name of Commodores' computer thingy!*).

The unit is about the same size as the Practical Solutions Mouse Master with a slightly shorter cable between the box and the plug for the mouse/joystick port. It has two red LEDs (light emitting diodes) on the faceplate of the box. One is located beside the mouse port and the other is next to the joystick port. When either the mouse or the joystick is in use, the LED for that particular device is lit up. It does not require an external power supply, drawing its power from the mouse/joystick port.

Compatibility, Problems, Etc.

Does it work with an Atari? Yes, it does and very well, too! One single click and you can automatically switch between your mouse and a second joystick. No more fumbling around, trying to switch between mouse and joystick. Those strange contortionist type maneuvers, trying to reach some obscure switch at the back of your desk, are now a thing of the past. I've used the Pyramid Mouse Master with every two player game I've got with absolutely no problems. The games I've tried are: *Blood Money*, *Gauntlet II*, *The Chaos Engine*, *Plutos*, *Speedball II*, and *Streetfighter II*. The only problem I noted was that sometimes *The Chaos Engine* failed to recognize *any* joystick input immediately after booting up. I think this is the game's fault and not the *Pyramid MouseMaster*. When I tried *The Chaos Engine* on my brother's 1040 ST, it did the same thing. There is one strange side effect of using the Pyramid Mouse Master with a joystick that has more than one firing button. I used it with a Wico Batstick and the HotShot joystick. The Batstick has a firing button and selector switch on the base. When the selector for the base button is turned off, you can fire the button on your stick normally, but pressing the base button shoots off the other joystick! I use this a lot when playing *Blood Money* by myself. I select two players and use the other player as a "dummy" to draw fire. I can't move the other player around but I can shoot, giving me twice the firepower! By the way, when you first turn your computer on, the mouse pointer will be locked in place. A simple click on your mouse brings it to life.

I tried to cause crashes and lockups by pushing the fire button on the joystick and clicking the mouse at the same time while in various games and applications, but it worked just fine. I tested this device on my TOS 2.06/1.62 (I use a TOS switcher) equipped 1040 STe with two megs of RAM. I also tested it on my brother's stock 1040 ST(fm) with TOS 1.2 and one meg of RAM.


The Invisible Peripheral

If I were to pick one word to describe this product, it would be invisible! It sits behind my Megafile 30 and quietly switches between mouse and joystick. I read somewhere that the most common problem with Atari machines is non-functional mouse/joystick ports. If that's true, then the Pyramid Mouse Master from Micro R & D should end that problem. The only complaint I can think of (and it's a small one) is that the cable from the unit to the mouse/joystick port needs to be a little longer.

Obviously, if you don't play games (especially two-player games), then this product probably isn't for you.

The Wrap Up!

If you have an Atari with the mouse/joystick ports underneath the keyboard (and this includes the Falcon030), then get this product. It's the absolute solution to an age old problem. I heartily recommend it, with no reservations. The price is only \$29.95, a bargain considering the convenience it offers. Tenex, Inc. can be reached at 1-800-PROMPT-1. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me online GENie at R.HALL49.



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MicroProse Golf

Another Round of Computer Golf

Review by Sam Van Wyck

Today's Atari user faces a curious dilemma. In the past, many of us attempted to convince our contemporaries (bosses, wives, parents) that even though our Atari computer could and did offer a number of games and diversions, it *really* (honest!) was also a serious machine capable of handling the most sophisticated business and technical applications. How many times have we heard, "Atari? I thought all those things did was play games?"

The problem today lies with a relatively small user base providing little incentive for the software developers. Over the past few years, the number of new titles has diminished and the greatest drop seems to have occurred in the entertainment sector. What irony! We now seem to have a full range of "productivity" titles available yet relatively few to challenge the gamer in each of us.

For this reason, we feel a little extra bit of gratitude for those who do supply us with an occasional diversion; especially when the game is challenging, well conceived; downright fun!

Hey! How About a Round of Golf?

Great idea, and after a few hours of pounding the word processor, I'm ready for a break. Happily, one of the latest golf simulations is available for the Atari: MicroProse's *GOLF*. The colorful package contains three disks, a technical sheet, data cards for six courses of varying difficulty and a superb 112-page manual. Forget about the bad weather, outrageous greens fees and the fact that there are only 24 hours in a day. With *GOLF*, you can set your own time and duration. In fact, about the only thing one can't do with *GOLF* that can be done on a real course is get caught in the rain!

The first 15 pages of the manual are devoted to a "Quickstart" introduction. While deemphasizing the technical aspects of the game, it allows the beginner to master the interface and menu choices while negotiating one of the easier courses. Strongly recommended are the driving range and putting practice greens as these allow familiarization without the added distraction of competition.

Here's How to Get Started

Although there may be as many as four players, human or computer, the first attempt at the game is best played alone (no witnesses, OK?). Following the

selection of a course, an isometric (viewed from above and to the side) view allows the player to see the entire hole, from tee to flag. This view may be rotated to permit a very close analysis of the terrain and intervening trees and bunkers. A curved white line shows the line of flight of the ball for the selected club. This line may be varied in both length and direction by pointing with the mouse. The distance to the point of impact is indicated on screen as is the distance to any obstacle.

Once the desired path of the ball is established, several choices may be made. The player has the option of altering both tee height and stance, both of which can markedly affect the height, distance and direction of the shot. The rationale for this is covered in the more advanced portion of the book. The novice need not bother and will normally continue to the next screen.

"Fore!"

A wind speed and direction indicator is displayed on both the Isometric View and the Shot View screen that follows it. While the advanced player must take these factors into account, the beginner always plays in dead calm conditions. Club selection is made by the computer but may be varied by the player if desired. Again, the beginner is well advised to follow the computer's lead in the early stages.

Of special interest is the Camera View Icon. Clicking here will open a screen indicating five choices of view. The player may elect to observe the flight of the ball from the tee or have the camera follow the ball as it sails down the course. Follow Mode may be varied by having the camera view shift to either a reverse or side view of the ball's final roll. Finally, a sweeping side view is possible whereby the camera begins behind the player, moves in a wide arc to the side following the ball and ends looking back down the fairway as the ball rolls to a stop. Formidable!

At the Tee

When the player is ready to begin the game, the scene shifts to a viewpoint behind, looking down the course. Any final adjustments of direction may be made here as well as modifications of tee height and stance. A circle appears around the figure, indicating the maximum amount of backswing and the point of

most effective ball contact, the "sweet spot." The stroke mechanism is essentially the same as in other golf simulations such as *Leader Board*: a touch of the mouse button starts the backswing, a second touch stops it and begins the downswing. A third designates the point at which the club will strike the ball.

Here is where one's practice on the driving range and putting green pay off. The total sequence of three mouse touches takes under two seconds. Missing the correct point on backswing or ball contact can put the ball into rough, sand or water, depending upon the terrain. The experienced player may choose to hit early or late in order to introduce hook or slice.

The player's stroke is accompanied with a *Whoosh* and *Click* as the club swings through its arc. The flight of the ball is followed by the camera in whatever mode has been chosen. On most holes, a second approach shot will be needed and the scene shifts to the overhead isometric view to display the new lie.

In every case, the screen displays the distance of the last shot, distance to the hole and the selected or recommended club. Upon reaching the green, it is possible to place a grid over the grass to provide a feel for the slopes to be encountered. Generally, this provides sufficient information for the player to "read" the green. However, ground sloping directly away from the player can be very deceiving. This lack of information can result in many missed putts. A different method of indicating terrain, such as shadowing or contour lines would, greatly improve this aspect of the game.

In most cases, approach shots are made using the woods or irons at or near their maximum range. However, when attempting to get onto the green from a relatively short distance, it is usually the Pitching Wedge that is employed. Maximum range of this club is almost 100 yards but often the distance to the green is far less, at least if the approach shots have been well played.

Here, the problem becomes one of limiting the distance of the ball and that requires very quick fingers on the mouse button. The first few tries by this beginner resulted in pounding the ball farther away on the other side of the green—and not just once! Remember that practice on the driving range is not limited to the "drivers" and should include all clubs except the putter.

Any shot may be reviewed via the Instant Replay feature. Camera position may be varied at will to provide instructive feedback (or bragging material).

Between holes, the scene shifts to the scorecard. This resembles the real item, complete with player's names, stroke count, totals and standing relative to par. The player may now elect to save the game, allowing a break for supper or outright cheating (a disclaimer in the book states that the save feature is not intended for the purpose of replaying a disastrous

hole; a hypocritical and self-serving statement comparable to the line on Easy-Wider rolling papers to the effect that they are not intended for sale or use by minors). A click on the Go Ahead arrow brings up the next hole and the game continues.

Partnerships

With the possible exception of being struck by lightning, just about anything one can do on a real golf course may be done in the course of a session with *GOLF*. After learning some of the basics, it is instructive to watch the technique of other players and the computer will provide up to four.

Each computer player may be tailored to provide widely varying degrees of challenge and technique. Choose either a right- or left-handed opponent, novice or expert, and then set the player's individual style: power player, putter, long or short shooter and, most interesting of all, aggressiveness! Each of your creations may be named or left to the computer's unimaginative "Player 1; Player 2..." Up to six profiles may be saved to disk, allowing the user to research specific styles and results.

On the course, play proceeds quickly, even in a foursome. The computer players select the appropriate strategy and club, swing and let fly. Instant replay and camera angle choice is available for any player.

Advanced Play

Once the beginner learns enough to become competitive (about an hour), many new options and challenges arise. Wind speed and direction become significant as does precision of stroke. Tee height and stance may be varied at will and an excellent discussion of these variables is included in the manual.

Seventeen clubs are available and only 14 may be carried. Selection is made before beginning play. As the player gains skill, potential shot distance increases, making the selection of appropriate weapons essential. While the Buckland Heath course is relatively simple, others such as St. Augustine and Ferdale are most certainly NOT! With these, proper club selection may improve a score by several strokes.

In addition to strokeplay and matchplay choices, one may choose to enjoy Medal, Skins (for money, computer keeps the bank), Head-To-Head, Tournament, Singles, Three- and Fourball, Bestball Three and Four, Threesome and Foursome. As a learning tool, *GOLF* provides the opportunity to develop appropriate strategy for many styles of competition.

In the Rough

No golfer manages to stay on the fairway all the time. As good as it is, MicroProse *GOLF* has managed to flub a few shots. Chief among these is the lack of hard drive installation capability. The program disk and a course disk may be used in Drives A and B, but

a cold boot is mandatory. Most annoying is the fact that the Amiga version does permit HD installation but the Atari version does not. Unfair!!

In addition to the disks themselves being copy-protected, a documentation lookup is requested at each boot. Ordinarily, I think this to be the most effective and sensible manner of protection but MicroProse has made the process unnecessarily difficult. Some of the references are easy: the third word in the sixth line of page 19. Others are, to put it gently, silly. Try finding the 13th word in the 19th line of page 8. Once one has the book, looking for an easy reference is just as effective as a difficult one, right?

The procedure of saving shots, games and other data is very casually dismissed and vital information about the process is found in a number of unlikely places. A more comprehensive description of the process placed under a logical heading reference would be most welcome.

The 19th Hole

I have no idea whether this game will appeal to a real golfer. I once thought I was a golfer but an ac-

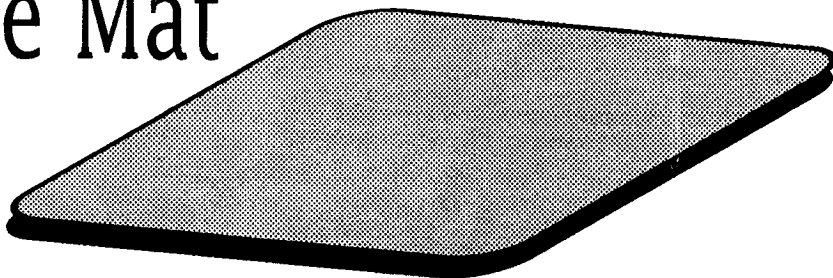
quaintance informed me that regardless of how well I played Miniature Golf, it doesn't really count (Imagine my chagrin!). I have a feeling, though, that even real golfers could wind up enjoying the game some afternoon when the greens are under several feet of snow. Hey, four good buddies in front of the fireplace, a couple brewskis, some chips. It just don't get any better than this, do it?

From the perspective of this non-golfer, I found *GOLF* to be fun, challenging and very instructive. There is far more to the program than I think I'll ever want to learn but it's there, for the beginner or advanced player.

MicroProse *GOLF* is published by MicroProse, Hampton Road Industrial Estate, Tetbury, Gloucestershire UK, GL8 8LD. The review copy was purchased from Tbad Computers for about \$33. Comments, corrections or brags about your best score will reach the author via GEnie: S.VANWYCK1.

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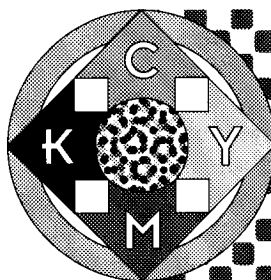
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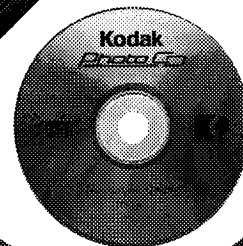
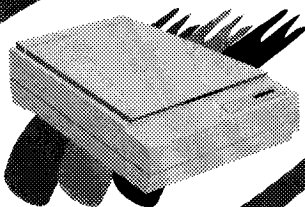
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The Common Sense Checkbook v1.3

For the Rest of Us, Home Finance That Fits the Bills!

Review by Edward Rosen

A quote from the manual by program author C. J. Mitchell sums up the design philosophy behind Cj Soft's appealingly simple, home accounting program, *Common Sense Checkbook* (CSC): "I want a program that does exactly what I want it to do!!! No more and no less." Fortunately, what Mr. Mitchell wanted for his program will probably satisfy the needs of many other average bill-payers as well. While CSC is primarily a checkbook management program, it integrates both savings account and credit account management features with a serviceable array of checkbook functions. Throw in a handful of tax management capabilities, a snappy, easy to use interface, and a short-money price tag and you've got a program that deserves some consideration.

Make no mistake, CSC is not for CPA wanna-be's. CSC doesn't handle budgets, mortgages or stocks. It can't print checks, make fancy graphs, or perform a variety of other features of marginal utility to the masses. And you can't even enter an amount over \$99,999.99. So if you're headed for a windfall and will be needing some help, you'd best look elsewhere. But, if you need to know quickly where your monthly paycheck has gone, and where it may be going, CSC may just fit your bill.

Facing Off with CSC

After a brief personalization of your program, CSC installs itself to the location of your choice, creat-

ing work files several folders deep in the process. From CSC's main menu you can chose to conduct business in CSC's Checking, Savings, Credit, or Tax sections. Selecting one of these choices snaps you to the appropriate submenu displaying the types of transactions you may perform in that section. Most choices in these submenus call up a graphical workscreen containing the fields into which you

will enter your financial data or tell CSC how you wish to review your prior transactions. The "Enter a Check" workscreen in the Checking section, probably the most frequently accessed, is particularly noteworthy for its real check-like layout. Like most other CSC workscreens, it also contains additional information relevant to your current task.

CSC's interface for entering data into the program's myriad workscreens is fast, informative, and practically fool-proof. An instruction line at the bottom of each work screen monitors your progress through the data fields and keeps you updated on your next move or how to get out of trouble. A liberal use of alert boxes makes it almost impossible to enter data in the wrong format. In addition, CSC will always do as much data entry for you as it can. For example, check numbers can be incremented automatically, and hitting return in any date field will enter the system date or the last date you have entered manually. If your selected transaction is, for example, the withdrawal of money from checking via an auto-

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D - Deposit
I - Add Interest
C - Credits to Account

MAINTENANCE
-----
V - Trash a check
O - Make a Correction
L - Clear Entries
R - Reconcile Account
Q - Edit Account Data

* - TOGGLE PRINT CHOICE
\ - LAST ENTRY
? - LIST ACCOUNTS
<Esc> RETURN TO MAIN MENU

MONEY OUT
-----
E - Enter a Check
H - Checks to Cash
W - Atm Withdrawal
X - Debit Card
S - Service Charges
T - Transfer to Savings

SEARCHES
-----
P - By Payee
N - Individual Entry
M - By Month
K - Cleared Entries
U - Uncleared Entries
A - By Account
Z - All Entries
```

```
SAVINGS
-----

MONEY IN
-----
D - Deposit
C - Credit to Account
I - Add Interest

MAINTENANCE
-----
V - Void an Entry
Q - Edit Account Data

* - TOGGLE PRINT CHOICE
? - LIST ACCOUNTS

MONEY OUT
-----
W - Withdrawal
T - Trans to Checking
S - Service Charges

SEARCHES
-----
P - By Deposit
L - By Withdrawal
Z - All Entries

\ - LAST ENTRY
<Esc> - RETURN TO MAIN MENU
```


matic teller machine, *CSC* automatically enters the letters "Atm" in the proper field. Once you get the hang of it, the consistency of *CSC*'s interface will have you zipping through your transactions in no time.

Some Atari veterans may recall that *CSC* was originally released as shareware for the 8-bit machines. Consequently, even in its ST incarnation, there is little need for mousing in *CSC*. This suits me fine, as I prefer not to leave the keyboard unless absolutely necessary. All of *CSC*'s menu choices can be selected effortlessly by clearly marked hotkeys, although you are able to mouse your menu selections from a GEM menu bar. However, save for when you are required to make a choice from a GEM [dialog/alert] box, there is no provision for mousing in any *CSC* workscreen. And even this need is negated by the thoughtful inclusion of Dan Wilga's *Form Do It* program, which hotkeys (dialog/alert box) options on the program floppy.

To *CSC*'s Credit

The accompanying screen shots of *CSC*'s Checking and Savings menus should give you a good idea of most of the basic functions *CSC* provides for managing your checking and savings account balance and also for some of the ways you can review where your money has gone. As you can see, these menus provide choices for each of the most common transaction types. While there isn't room enough here to describe each function individually, suffice it to say that *CSC* handles these ordinary tasks with aplomb.

CSC's most advanced feature, however, is its ability to selectively track transactions with individual payees. *CSC* accomplishes this feat by letting you create what it refers to collectively as credit accounts.

Credit accounts are created from within *CSC*'s Credit section or from within the Checking section when utilizing the "Enter a Check" function. If a check is written to a payee for which no credit account has been previously established, *CSC* asks if you wish to create one. Choosing to create a credit account causes *CSC* to ask for 1) an account number, 2) whether the account should be set up as revolving or non-revolving and 3) if the entire account should be flagged as tax deductible.

Specifying a credit account as revolving actually requires an additional entry; an opening balance for the account, equivalent to how much you owe that payee. Candidates for revolving accounts include any accounts for which you are not required to keep your account paid-in-full, like a VISA or department store account. From then on, *CSC* will automatically deduct the amount of a check written to a revolving account

MAIN The Common Sense Checkbook		© 1992 CjSoft Ver. 1.3	
ENTER A CHECK			
Account Name: PAYMASTER CHECKING		Last checking Account Activity	
Bank Name: PASSIONFRUIT SAVINGS		Check #: 289	
Account Number: 000 MINUS 1		Date: 09/17/93	
Last check used: 209		Payee: CURRENT NOTES	
Check # 290		Amount: 27.00	Balance: 4130.29
Date 09/17/93			
PAY TO CURRENT NOTES		Amount	\$27.00
Memo 1 YR GIFT SUB FOR SUE		New Checking Balance \$4103.29	
Last Activity For This Account			
Account Name: CURRENT NOTES		Revolving: N Taxable: N	
Account Number: 111-111-111			
Date	Transaction	Amount	Tot. Paid
09/17/93	Payment Check # 289	27.00	75.00
09/17/93	Payment Check # 290	27.00	102.00
MESSAGE WINDOW			
HIT ANY KEY TO CONTINUE			

from both your checkbook's total balance and the from the current balance of the revolving account. Cash payments (recorded in the Credit section) made to a revolving account will also be deducted from the revolving account balance.

Thus, for a revolving account, you can instantly see (or print) all of the payments you've made and how much you still owe Federated Electronics for that *1040 ST* you've been paying off. You may also enter new charges (such as purchases, service charges, interest charges) to a revolving account at any time. As you would expect, such charges are added to a revolving account's current balance. Entering charges due to interest accrued on an account balance specifically as such allows *CSC* to report the totals of these interest charges for each credit account individually and for all credit accounts collectively.

For payments made to credit accounts set up as non-revolving, *CSC* simply adds the payment amount to a running total of all monies paid to that creditor. And of course, if a payment is by check, *CSC* also subtracts that amount from your current checkbook balance. Upon reviewing my non-revolving account with my local municipal court, I was truly shocked to learn how much it has cost me to park my car in my fair city. A neatly itemized *CSC* printout listing each of my parking transgressions currently adorns my dashboard. One problem I discovered on this list was that although the MEMO line in the "Enter a Check" workscreen allows for 25 characters, only 13 characters appear in lists printed to either the screen or to paper.

Creation of credit accounts also adds a very handy feature to the *CSC* interface. Whenever *CSC* needs to know which credit account you wish to work with, you need only type the first letter of the account name followed by an "*". *CSC* finds the first account beginning with that letter. If it's not the right one, pressing "N" proceeds to the next match until the desired account comes up and is confirmed by you. In-

cluding additional letters speeds up the process even more.

Common Sense and Taxes

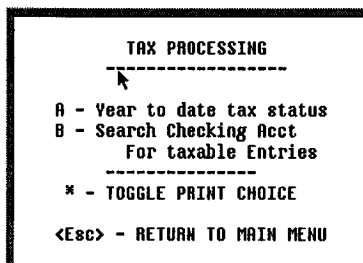
As I mentioned, credit accounts may be flagged as tax deductible. Flagging a credit account as tax deductible allows *CSC* to report the total dollar amount of all payments made to all tax flagged accounts. You can view this total in *CSC*'s Tax section where you may also print (but not view) a neatly organized, itemized report of all payments made to each of your credit accounts, tax flagged or not. This report includes each account's name and number, its revolving status, its tax status, the total amount of payments made, and the total of all interest charges. Another option in the Tax section allows you review all tax flagged checks written to payees for which you have chosen not to create a credit account. All very handy come April.

If you know you will be making both tax deductible and non-tax deductible payments to a single payee, you may find it necessary to create two separate accounts (with slightly different names), one flagged and the other one not. Though a credit account's tax status can be changed at any time, they are entirely one way or the other.

Another important fact you should know is that *CSC* can only track one checking account, one savings account, and associated credit accounts at a time. To manage more than one checking (and/or savings) account, you must install a separate set of *CSC* workfiles into a different folder. If you're managing two checkbooks, you should consider making payments to individual credit accounts from only one checkbook or the other, or be prepared to consolidate the separate reports manually.

Close-Out

Perhaps the only truly annoying aspect of *CSC* for me was its manual. In 50+ pages of excruciatingly repetitive detail, the *CSC* manual does tell you exactly



what buttons to push in essentially all of the program's menus and workscreens, but avoids any substantial discussion of *why* you might want to push those buttons. In fact, reading the manual gave me the feeling of being on a magical mystery tour, not knowing exactly where we were going until the ride was over. And even

then, some head scratching and trial and error were still necessary before I felt safe enough to enter over a half year's worth of my financial records. To you other account program neophytes out there: be prepared to experiment.

However, the more familiar I became with *CSC* the more I appreciated its streamlined, no frills approach to record keeping. While *CSC* was not suited to 100% of my needs, I found sufficient flexibility in the program to devise simple work-arounds for recording transactions that are not covered directly by one of *CSC*'s built in menu choices. I've also found that *CSC*'s speedy interface has encouraged me to keep my records up to date; something I had very rarely attempted on paper. So if complicated home accounting mega programs have been causing you to put off computerizing your financial records, you might want to look to *CSC* for some good old-fashioned electronic bookkeeping.

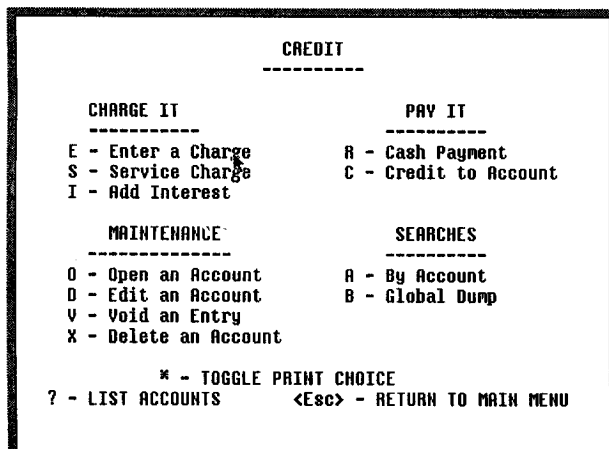
Hardware Considerations

CSC comes on a single-sided floppy and will run on any *ST* family computer, in monochrome or color. As of this writing, it has not been tested on either a *TT* or a *Falcon*. *CSC* never crashed or froze on either my *1040 ST* (TOS 1.4) or my *MSTE* (TOS 2.06) even when booted with over two megabytes of auto folder programs and desk accessories. A hard drive is recommended (but not required) to speedup file I/O while *CSC* does its thing although my tests running *CSC* from a floppy did not leave much time for thumb twiddling. Folks with only a single-sided drive will be happy to know that a freshly installed *CSC* program occupies only 150K of disk space, which should leave plenty of room for expanding workfiles.

The manual states that you will need an Epson FX compatible printer for printouts but I found that my HP DeskJet 500 produced essentially identical reports with no additional software.

Common Sense Checkbook v1.3 is published by Cj Soft, Inc. with a MSRP of \$34.95 and is available from:

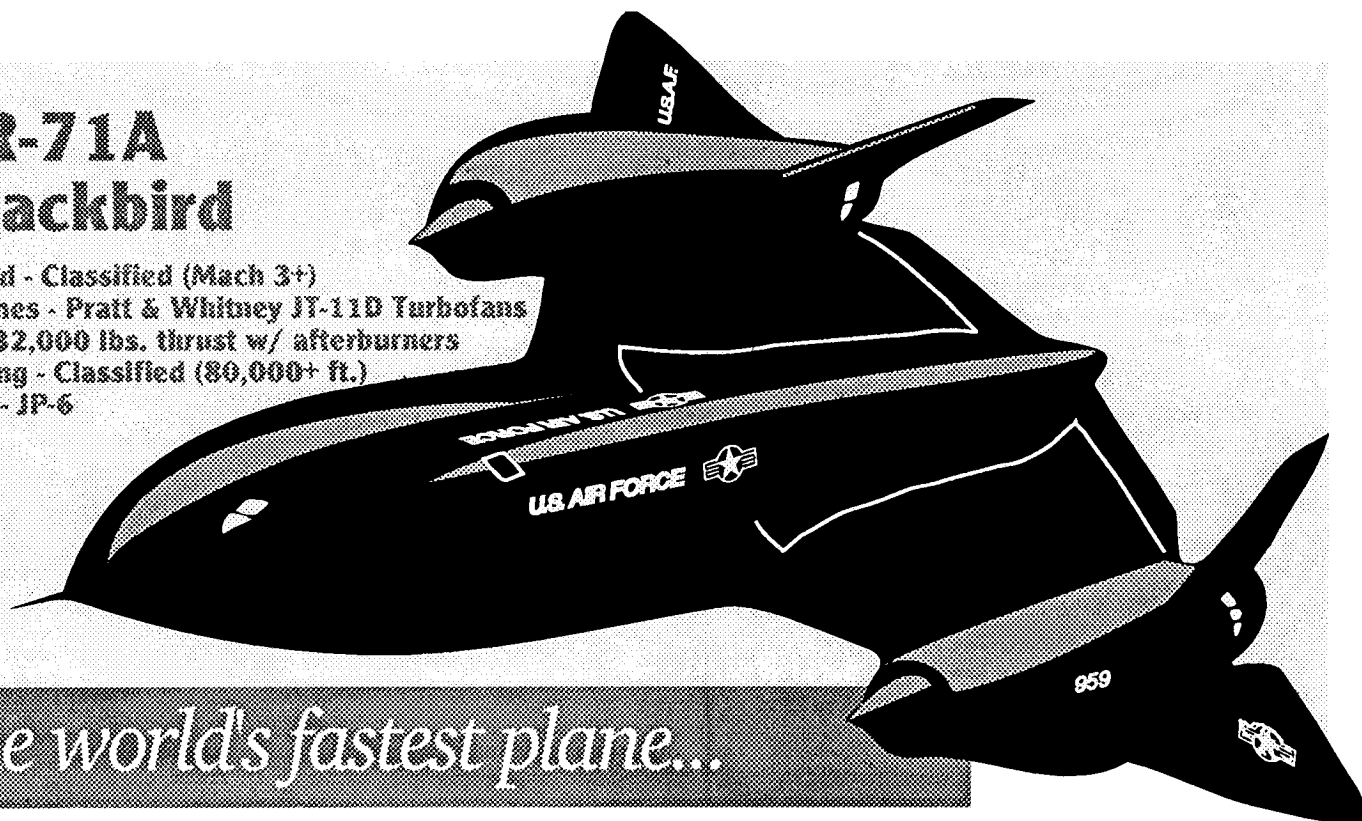
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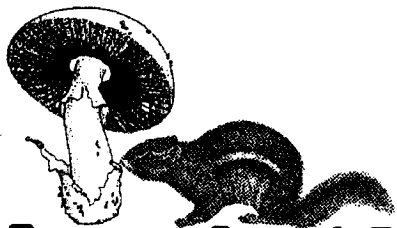
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Calamus SL Update and Outline III

Running Out of Ram by David Barkin

Recently I wrote to Joe Waters about his lack of understanding of my need for more space for my column. I begged him for just another 50 or 60 pages a month so that I could respond to the requests of my many readers. Among the topics I wanted to cover was the exciting digitalization of beer, which brings good bock beer to the Atari personal computer, while other platforms are stuck with Bud Light. I also wanted to write about the new computerized dog I've assembled from spare parts of a burned out 1040. The latter would have included a blow-by-blow description of how much tough work was required on my part to get this machine to self destruct. Believe me, it wasn't easy. I've tried to be reasonable about these topics but I've received no acceptable response other than remarks about my continuing struggle to punctuate properly and his *continuing struggle* to make corrections. Such being the case, this month I'll take a step back from covering new topics and do an update to DMC's desk-top publishing system. This includes *Calamus SL*, the modules available, and *Outline III*, DMC's vector art program.

Outline III

I've always been a big fan of *Outline*. While there are many limitations to the program, its integration of a calculator with the multiple copy function produced results unavailable on other platforms. I diligently studied the program and learned all sorts of work-arounds to deal with the limitations. I hoped that, some day, these limitations would be dealt with; and who knows, maybe something new would be added. *Outline III* has now been around for six months (whatever happened to *Outline II*?) and from remarks I've gotten in the mail, quite a few people are not really aware of what it can do.

First and foremost, this program works in 24 bit color. Moreover, the smooth grayscale transitions of the original *Outline* can now be smooth transitions from one color to another. We are talking major spectacular effects. Slow fades from *any* user defined color to another. To make a little jump in this article, how about the following: Create an unusual color graphic in *Outline III*, import it into *Calamus SL*, and combine it with a color photograph. This is science fiction come to life on the personal computer. More on this later.

One limitation of the original *Outline* was the inability to temporarily group frames so that they could be positioned on the screen. No, you had to carefully plan everything in advance. 50 layers of copies had best be in the right position or you might as well start over. My pre-computerized dog used to get quite a few

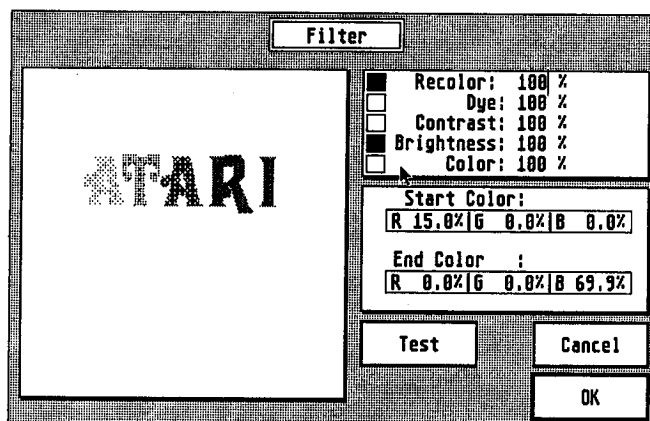


Figure 1. The filter dialogue box of *Outline III*. This is for sophisticated color modification of already created objects. 16 million choices.

chuckles out of watching my face when this problem occurred. This has been fixed. You can temporarily, or permanently, group frames and move them any place you want. Text handling has been improved. You can even load ASCII text files and set up formatting and color. Not to get carried away here, this is no word processor; but adding, or even creating, small text blocks is no longer a problem. Another valuable addition is the ability to define the thickness of border lines. I used to deal with this by creating a background shape larger than the original. This shape would form my border. This is no longer a difficulty. Border sizes can be defined and even assigned separate colors.

Outline III provides a unique form of on-line help. The complete manual, including an index, is available from within the program. I might add that this system is surprisingly complete. Very, very handy. The new version of *Outline* also allows the importation of .IMG files. You can't do anything with these files, but they give you a template for either tracing the .IMG file or for giving you an idea of how a future combination will look. Another nifty improvement is the ability to directly export as .PS or .EPS files from within the program. Another refinement is the improvement of

the entire .CVG format. There used to be difficulties with some .CVG files. These problems no longer exist. Almost all functions now use keyboard equivalents and *Outline III* now uses a rubber band system of defining zoom. You can now easily change the viewing of your work. Another big improvement is the increase in the size of your files. You are no longer limited to just 100K. 250K is the new size limit and I've never even come close to hitting that mark. There are quite a few other improvements, little touches which make using this program a real pleasure.

What about the down side? To begin with, *Outline III* runs in ST High, TT Medium and TT High. In other words, ST owners will not be able to see all these fancy new colors. You're going to have to have a TT, a Falcon or a graphics card to take full advantage of this program. Another problem is speed. The original *Outline* was reasonably fast on my ST; *Outline III* runs fairly slow. Not to cause any confusion, the program is quite usable, but no speed demon. Once again, owners of computers with math co-processors will find that either *Outline* zips along. The program takes full advantage of these nifty chips. On my TT, the *Outline* programs run around 10 times faster than on my ST. This is more a reflection of my math co-processor and not my computer. In summary, I'll just say that this is a great improvement on a great program. It has brought professional color vector capability to my DTP setup.

Calamus SL

Anyone who has read this column knows about my deep infatuation with *Calamus SL*. We are talking near religious frenzy here. An illustration of its power was recently provided when I participated in a New York City Council race. In politics it pays to be quick. Your opponent puts out some piece of negative literature and *you want to be fast to reply*. At the time I offered my services, fast meant one or two days for a leaflet, a week or more for lino output. With *SL*, *Retouche* and my HP IV printer I cut that time down to one hour

and two days respectively. Mac's and *Quark Express* are almost a standard in the New York area. But I could typeset and lay out literature about as fast as I could type it in. My only problem lay in literature which *had* to be output on a lino-type. But these were for mailings on glossy paper. DMC's new service bureau provided me with overnight return on my *Calamus* files. Finally, at the end of the campaign, when I didn't even have that two day leeway, I typeset a glossy two color separation on my HP printer. The results were spectacular, much better than I had nervously anticipated. Indeed, as it turned out, except for the campaign poster itself, I actually could have typeset *everything*.

How It's Done

Just why is this powerhouse of a program so quick? Desk-top publishing on a personal computer is rapidly reaching maturity. *Calamus SL* is in the forefront of this technological revolution, and it's designed to last. The basic *SL* program is a shell. Into this shell, each of the necessary functions is modular in form. Every aspect of the program is actually a module that, when loaded, acts as an integral part of the program. Which modules load when the program is run is defined by the user. If additional functions are needed, just load an additional module. If you decide that a particular function is now used all the time, you merely redefine your set-up. This entire set-up process is extremely simple. There are tremendous benefits here, in terms of the speed and flexibility of the program. A full page of text takes three seconds to redraw (on my TT). But this speed can even be increased by a user definable cache system. The same page which took three seconds to redraw, took one tenth of a second with the text cache on (actually, I'm just guessing here; it seemed to take no time, but hey, I've got to keep up my rep for technalize). The present version of *SL* is in its third revision (8/4/93). It is a solid program, although users should be warned to save often. *SL* is not a program for 1 meg machines. Just for starters, run-

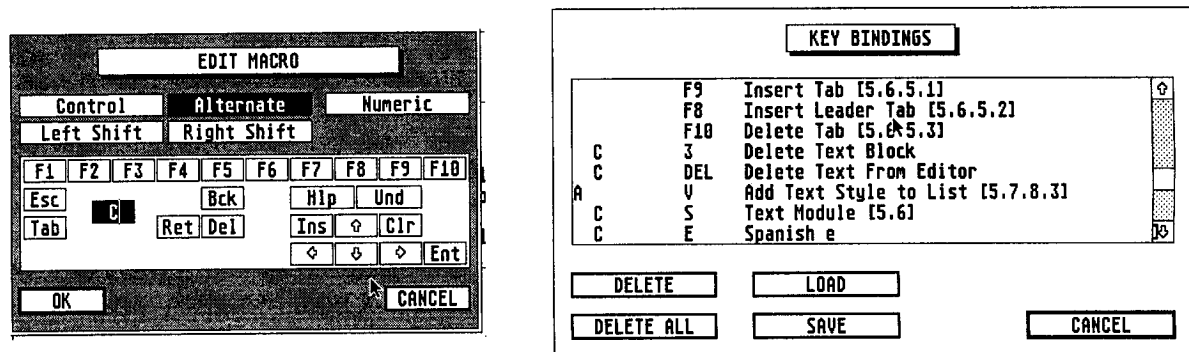


Figure 2. The Macro recorder. On the left is the dialogue box allowing you to assign the actuating key for the macro. On the right are a few of the macro's that I've created. There is no limit (or at least I would need a calculator to figure out the limit) to the number of macro's you can create.

ing *SL* is going to eat two megs of memory. But DMC has improved its virtual memory option to a point where it's actually practical to use. If a loaded file is too large to be held in memory, then the file gets written to a temporary storage area on your hard drive. The program will then operate by switching back and forth from your hard drive and whatever RAM memory is free. In addition, you can delete modules and free up additional memory.

The Macro Recorder

All of the above is one aspect to the speed of *Calamus*. With or without modules, *Calamus* is an in-depth program. There are icons and dialogue boxes galore. Options in so many numbers, that the mind boggles in contemplating them. What is the method that DMC has come up with to negotiate this sea of power? In *Calamus 1.09* there was the editable Help file. By loading this file into a word processor, you could define quite a few keyboard equivalents to use instead of hunting for the right icon. There were limitations, in the sense that you could only use the alternate key plus another key. I used this process to speed my way from icon to icon. I thought this was great and raved about it. *SL*'s new equivalent leaves me breathless. What has happened is that there is now a macro recorder. Turn the macro recorder on, click through a series of layers and icons, turn the macro recorder off and you then assign keyboard equivalents that will duplicate the entire process. Just about any key can be assigned with variations of the alternate, control, shift and other keys. The power is unbelievable. The simplest use of this recorder would simply be to jump from text handling to graphic handling, from vector files to loading a new font. But much more sophisticated things can be done. I use the macro recorder to make foreign language letters for typesetting Spanish, to turn on and off proportional sizing, to access different modules and to activate functions within modules. Once created, these macros function instantly, no matter how long they took to create.

Sometimes problems occur because the macro recorder is more sophisticated than I am. I tried to make a macro to access foreign letters by going to the character set overview. With this option you can scroll through all the characters in the selected font. Ok, I turned on the macro recorder, turned on the character set overview, and selected the proper letter, finally saving the macro. The problem was that the macro recorder saved the *position* of the letter in the character set viewing area. In other words, if that window changed, for whatever reason, then the macro would access whatever letter was in the new position. Finally, I came to the solution. While in a text frame, there is another way of entering a specific letter. Hitting the control plus the escape key will produce a window showing the entire character set available to *Calamus*

and will allow the user to click on a letter and enter it into the text. I used the macro recorder to select all the foreign characters and I then assigned the control key plus an individual key to access them. Now when I type in Spanish and want to add "á" I simply type "control a" and there it is. I can type in Spanish as fast as I type in English. Of course, it would help if I *understood* Spanish and if I didn't have to look at my original text hanging from my monitor by rubberbands. In this particular case, DMC has not been very helpful. They refuse to provide me with someone who understands Spanish to do my typing. I suggested modularizing such a person. I would even be willing to pay a reasonable amount. Eventually, after 22 phone calls and many hours of reasoned discussion, they agreed to "think" about this idea.

All in all, these combinations of features make *SL* and my computer the ultimate typesetting machine. What makes this statement even truer is that as Desktop Publishing changes, additional modules can simply integrate themselves into the system. In fact, *that is just what is happening*. Let's take a look at some of the modules already available. Let there be no confusion here, you need nothing more than the standard modules that come with *Calamus SL* to make full use of the program. The following are optional modules (and two of the standard ones) which I have personally used.

Brush

This is a simple module for editing raster graphics. By no means a full featured paint program, it has the following options. You can select between a number of brush sizes and you can select between any of 16 million colors. Did you ever load a raster graphic and realize that it needed some small changes? Now you can make these changes without breaking your stride. This is one of those modules that I wouldn't miss if I didn't have it, but it sure has come in handy. One limitation, which in turn leads me the next module, is that if the loaded file is not a color file, then brush will only work in monochrome.

Raster Export (Data Former)

This module allows you to convert a *Calamus SL* page or frame into any of a large number of raster formats. These include: CRG (the native format of *Calamus*), IMG, Enhanced Simplex, GIF, TIF, PCX, Targa, IFF, Windows Bitmap (BMP), STad as well as the standard Atari formats. If the format is capable of being used for 8-bit gray or 24- and 32-bit color, then you can export it that way. These files are cross platform compatible. In other words you can give them to someone who isn't fortunate enough to own an Atari or doesn't use *SL*. You can also define the dpi of the exported file. This module does everything it's supposed to. Some interesting possibilities include converting

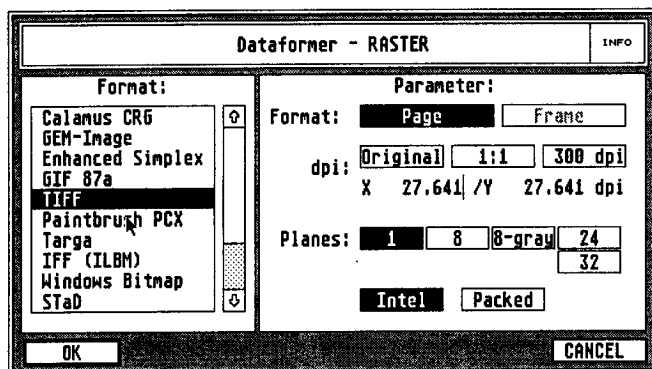


Figure 3. DF Raster. Here are some of the formats and options in the Raster Export module. The options are limited only by the format's own limitation.

that monochrome IMG file into 24 bit color. After re-importing the file into *Calamus* you can then use the above mentioned brush module to, in fact, add color. Another possibility, which I'm just beginning to explore, is loading in color vector graphics from *Outline III*, exporting them as 24-bit TIF files, and then manipulating them in *Retouche*, the color photo-manipulation program from *Computerbild*. This promises to be a lot of fun.

Vector Export (Data Former)

Part two of the Data Former module (Raster Export is part one) works in the same manner as the Raster export module. But, in this case, you can save pages and frames as vector files. The choices include: CVG (both *Outline* version 1 and the new version III), GEM Metafile, Auto CAD, HPGL, PS and Illustrator EPS. PS files can be saved with whatever raster graphics are on the page. I've had a lot of trouble with this aspect of the Data Former module. There is no problem with HPGL or CVG but the PS export has a hard time with TIF files. I stated a couple of months ago that this problem had been solved, but, once again, I'm in the embarrassing position of retracting a statement. The PS export will only save these files as IMG files, and this takes away much of the utility.

PSK Write

Unlike the two above mentioned modules, this one comes standard with *SL*. Without PSK Write, you can still enter text at a reasonable rate from within *Calamus*, but this module gives the user much of the power and convenience of a full featured word processor. It's fast, smooth and a pleasure to use. I use the Atari version of *Word Perfect* for much of my typing needs. I do this basically because I can't spell to save my life and if *Word Perfect* has problems, it doesn't lack a good spell checker. But, as time goes on, I worry less and less about this because PSK Write really is a pleasure to use. It's so good, that for people who *can* spell, they could probably just enter text di-

rectly from the module. Certainly after text has been imported into *Calamus* (*Calamus* can import *Word Perfect* 5.1 files directly) PSK Write makes life easy because of its speed.

Speedline

Speedline is a raster to vector conversion program. It's incredibly fast and easy to use. It doesn't come up to *Convector Professional* by *Gribnif Software*, but if you don't do vectorization on a regular basis, than it's all the power you need. One other lack is that it doesn't work in color, as *Silhouette*, distributed by *Toad Computers*, does. This leads me to discuss the Vector module of *Calamus*.

Vector Drawing Module

The Vector Drawing module is a full featured vector drawing program. It is, by no means, a complete vector solution. On the other hand, it is a much more powerful program than the raster module Brush. It is so powerful, that I, the great computer guru, would have called it a complete solution if I wasn't also aware of *Outline*. This module works in full 24-bit color and, aside from its other features, you can use it to color the output of Speedline. One nifty use I made of the two modules was to make a two color separation. I loaded in a TIF file of my political poster, loaded in the monochrome IMG file, which was a silhouette of my TIF file, vectorized it in Speedline, and then changed the color to an opaque white. I then used this as a mask which allowed me to paste my photo on a blue background, while still keeping the photo opaque. I've since thought of easier methods of doing all of this, but my solution worked flawlessly. I understand (but I can't say for sure because I haven't used it) that the Mask module, also available from DMC, will do this sort of masking automatically. Why did I just give the preceding boring, useless tutorial? *Calamus SL* allows the user to make frames either opaque, transparent or reverse transparent (where black comes into contact with black it becomes white and vice versa). If a raster image has unused space in an opaque frame, then it will cover the underlying frame. If you, in turn, make the frame transparent then the underlying color will show through your raster image. Some sort of opaque mask is necessary. My little tutorial becomes obsolete if the mask module does what I've been told it does. But this illustrates some of the obscure difficulties of computer publishing.

Color Separation

Calamus SL provides for full color separations, and even allows a great degree of control of this process. But this optional module allows the user to modify colors in the complex manner which might be required by any potential client. You can do these separations without this module but it gives the user control

of the contrast, brightness, *degree*, and a number of other modifications of color. Without this module there is still plenty of power to change and control your work, but not to the degree that might be requested by fear maddened beer brewers in the midst of an advertising campaign. In other words, professional color separation is now brought to the desk-top. It's quite simple to use, but you have to have the knowledge of how to use color to take advantage of it. Keep in mind that printing and typesetting are skilled trades. Our Atari and *SL* give us all the tools of the trade. It even makes learning the trade relatively simple, but they don't replace true knowledge.

Raster Generator

This is another standard module of *Calamus* that deserves mention. In the course of using *Calamus I*

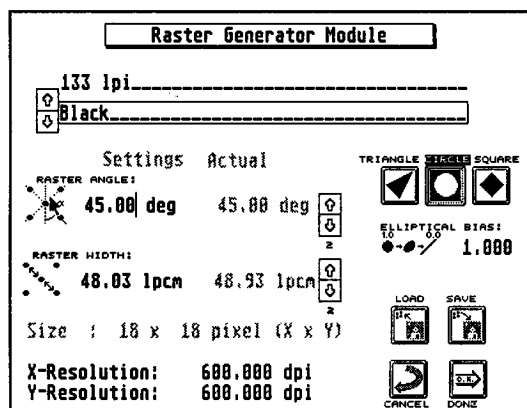


Figure 4. The settings dialogue of the Raster Generator module. The allows you to set the "screening" of the final printout. Match your image to the actual printer.

discovered that when printing graphics that are device independent, how do you set the dithering pattern? A 50 percent square of gray will be dithered quite differently by a 2400 dpi lino, than a 9-pin dot matrix printer. The raster generator module gives us full control over this process. We can set the image to match the device being used for printing. This is refereed to as screening. I've learned the hard way that this is a complex question. A photograph might very well look better printed out at a lower resolution then a higher one. It might very well look better if the printer dots are square instead of round. It depends on the individual image. The Raster Generator allows quick and easy change of frames or pages or complete documents. You can even elongate printer dots into lines. You can make the printer dots round or square or triangular. The module also allows you to set the angle these printer dots assume for *each color of your graphic*. This is very important because for final color

printing these printer dots have to cover the page and not each other. Improper alignment of printed color dots is another cause of the dreaded moire pattern.

Mount

This is an incredibly useful little gadget for the printing of pamphlets, books and other multi-page documents. You can use the settings from within this module to print pages in the order they will appear in the final binding. You can also print two pages on each printer page and they will be in the proper order for final assembly. This is another touch, which in my ignorance, I didn't miss until I started to use it.

Miscellaneous Modules

There are numerous other modules which DMC has added as standard. Focultone, which allows the matching of colors to predetermined colors. This allows your printer to know exactly what you mean by *light red*. There is a module for controlling the lineraity of color, modules for your color printer to increase color accuracy. There are some cute toy modules like CYMK Swap. This allows you to switch the assigning of colors, as in cyan for black. The results can sometimes be fascinating. The module, Rotate, allows the rotation of any raster format image file (IMG, .TIF, etc) in one degree increments. There is a module which compresses the size of raster graphics. This acts to free both memory and disk space. There are at least a score of other modules, which I haven't covered, and the implications of this system are far reaching. The entire concept of a fully modular program allows indefinite expansion of the system. I suggest writing to DMC for a full list and description of these modules because more are being released all the time and, by no means, have I covered them all.

This latest incarnation of *Calamus SL* is not without flaws. Minor problems remain. I feel that search and replace text could be improved. The lack of true Postscript compatibility remains a problem. But technology has improved to the point where I can do professional layout with my own printer. This latest version of *SL* is almost as fast as 1.09N, not that *SL* was slow to begin with. In addition, DMC has made a big effort to establish a service bureau, which has many advantages over Postscript. For one thing, you never know how your .PS file will look when it's printed on their printer, with their typeface. When DMC prints out your file, it is exactly what you expected. It may very well turn out to be garbage, but you wont have the service bureau to blame; it's your garbage. Finally, DMC provides excellent support.

Without qualification, I will say that this is the finest program for Desktop Publishing available for the personal computer, and it's all ours. Until next month.

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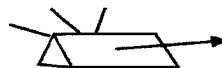
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Small's First Through Fourth Laws

1: Small's Law of Maximum Effort

By David Small

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Small's First, Second, Third, and Fourth Laws are the result of spending 60% of my entire lifetime with computers. (Actually, since the first five to ten years are fairly noncomputerized, the figure is higher; I only spent 14 years of my life without a computer. 75% is probably more accurate.)

I'll spend most of my article space on the second law, which is quite important; I would like to see research done on it, but I fear that the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle, as laid down in the 1930's, will prevent it from being experimentally verified. (See "Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle," CN, September 1993, p. 25.)

Let's dive in:

Small's First Law

"It doesn't matter what route you pick to do anything. You will have to expend the Maximum Effort Possible to get it done."

This is also known as "Small's Law of Maximum Effort."

Let me illustrate with a few examples; I imagine you can come up with quite a few of your own once you see where I'm coming from.

Let's assume you are using *TOOL 1.0*, some program that does something. *TOOL 2.0* comes out and is advertised as being "Five Times Faster." You have a project which must be completed, using either *TOOL 1.0* or *2.0*.

Your *hope*, and why computer programming shops advertise upgrades, is that *TOOL 2.0* really WILL enable you to get things done five times more quickly, freeing up 4/5ths of your computer time for other things—either adding more to your project that you didn't have time for before, or giving you time for other things.

However, Small's Law of Maximum Effort will stop you in your tracks for that "extra" 4/5 time, no matter what. Something along the following lines WILL happen (I've seen this so many times it became a rule for me, something to be expected. It's not like I *wanted* it!):

* *TOOL 2.0* will have some incompatibility with *1.0*, even if it is a bug fix that you learned to work

around in *1.0*; your bug fix will now fail. Alternately, *TOOL 2.0* will have new bugs in its new features (as any new code does), which will cause you lots of extra time to find, and work around. (This is why I fanatically stick with *one set* of tools, and keep a "bug list" of known bugs in a given tool.) I am only dragged to new tools kicking and screaming.

***** War Story *****

(In this column, I'm going to give real-world examples that happened to me; the term for these is "war stories," even though they are about computers. Interestingly, the teachers at our kids' schools call such tales (about any subject) "war stories," too, so the term is generic. I hope you enjoy the examples; and longtime Atari developers will say, "Wow, do I remember *that one*!")

AS68

Examples? I have a truckload. Ha! Just you *try* putting two labels with no operands together in AS68, the assembler Atari first shipped with the development kit back in '85. Like this:

... (whatever previous code) ...

RTS

* New Sub-Routine Comment

DOCALC:

RELOOP:

... (and the code for the subroutine).

Anyway, AS68 will *not* generate an error message (that's too easy!), and, indeed, there really isn't anything wrong with what I've written. However, from this point in your code, *every branch calculation* the computer makes, and puts into the executable .PRG it generates (the number of bytes forwards or backwards the computer must branch to inside the program, according to your program) will be off, WRONG, by first 2 bytes, then 4, then 6, 8, and so forth. Two more bytes wrong for each BRANCH or JUMP or JSR you do. That is one *nasty* thing to figure out, because you don't assume an assembler is that dumb, and because it causes such weird crashes. I learned the hard way that the second word of a 68000 machine language command is usually data and causes "Illegal Instruc-

tion" crashes, or worse, the dreaded "accidental data becomes accidental program instructions."

Or, just use AS68's "conditional assembly from hell," where segments of code are turned on or off by the use of symbols. That will also cause the above symptoms—branch going out of sync +2 each time it is called.

Or, if, when exhausted one 5 a.m. morning, you forget and type AS68 -L MYCODE instead of AS68 -L MYCODE.S, AS68 will (unbelievable!!) kindly write its output file (the "object code," or machine-language-level instructions) *right on top of your source code*, the INPUT program you typed in (the human readable one). I'm not kidding!! I blew away my source code a number of times that way and got paranoid about keeping backups after seeing an hour's work destroyed. Dan Moore finally came up with a "special" batch program that examined what you had typed. If you ran AS68, and if it didn't have a trailing .S, it aborted. It saved me many times.

There are other horror stories of AS68, LO68, and RELMOD, the original Atari development pak tools, but I'll spare you; this is not a Freddie Krueger magazine.

Even with Bugs...

Yet, I used AS68, LO68 & RELMOD, and SID *continuously*, and wrote Spectre with it as well as most of the START magazine column-programs. I *knew their bugs*. Before a new project, I could just quickly review the bug list and say, okay, I know not to do *this* or *that*.

I was dragged away from AS68, which was dreadfully slow, by DevPak ST and DevPak TT, from HiSoft in England. HiSoft changes U.S. distributors once every 60th of a second (each vertical blank), so I don't know who is distributing it between your reading each paragraph in this saga, or I would tell you. It is a fine, fast product; it blows away AS68 in terms of speed. Anyway, it took time to convert code from AS68 "form" into DevPak code "form" (there is, alas, no one, standard form for assembly language); for instance, all the data declarations (where you pre-store or pre-set data in the program) had to be changed from:

```
VAR1 .dc.w $0    (two bytes of zeros AS68)
to:
VAR1 dc.w $0      (two bytes of zeros DevPak)
```

Yes, just the leading dot had to be changed.

While this might not seem like much (a search/replace can help automate it), it is not funny with a 25,000 line program like Spectre. It took *days* to convert from AS68 to DevPak, because of all this and a bunch of other minor, trivial differences . . . trivial, but deadly. We had to use ALN (Atari's Linker-NOT!, I

call it), which is MUCH faster than LO68 & Relmod when we moved to DevPak, and getting everything *just right* for ALN, which is picky as can be, was agonizing; there were something like 64 possible combinations of the way DevPak could output things (which form of executable, what "debug level" (what's that?), if the "case" of a label mattered, how long labels could be, etc., etc., etc. If there were 64 combinations, we tried all 64 and the 64th finally worked before we could use ALN. This is a *perfect* example of Small's Law #1 of Maximum Effort.

So, while DevPak TT gained us probably ten times in speed, *we paid for it* in ten times more debugging effort trying to get the tools to work. (It reminds me of assembling toys on Christmas Eve for the kids, learning these new tools...)

***** End War Story *****

* Even if TOOL 2.0 is perfectly compatible with TOOL 1.0 (I have personally never seen this), *something else will happen*. (Read that in a tone of voice that says, "If you build it, he will come," from "Field of Dreams.") Something *must* occur to make you use up the time you thought you were going to save. One example: I watched Dan Moore throw away a new compiler he had painfully converted Spectre code to when it automatically word-aligned byte-long fields. (This means the machine stuck a bunch of zero bytes in the middle of a data structure and *massively* screwed up everything that used that table). Dan had specified the table clearly, using bytes, words, and longs, in standard "C" format, and could not find a way to work around this bug.

* I'm telling you, *something else will happen*. The floppy disk you wrote your 600,000 byte long document or source code to will, when read, have the *first* 512 bytes of your file, repeated over and over and over and over, until it reached 600,000 bytes. (That's a lotta repetition. This is *still* not fixed in TOS; it is a bug that happens when I transfer data from my Toshiba-San 2000SX, and the Atari ST with TOS 1.4 or bigger (2.06 or TT-TOS are the key ones). I kid you not.

Someone once told me the specific bug is that Atari TOS cannot deal with "1K size F.A.T. tables, they must be 2K," which means the way Toshiba formats 720K double-sided (or single-sided, the bug is still there) disks is not something Atari can handle. Apparently, when the disk part of TOS (called DOS, Disk Operating System) was re-written for TOS 1.4, because the older TOS got so slow (on the order of *minutes*) to copy files onto a nearly full hard disk, plus other bugs ... well, when they re-wrote TOS, instead of *reading off the disk like it should* what size "block" on disk the File Allocation Table (F.A.T.) allocates, they just blindly assume it's 2,048 bytes, 4 sectors, or "2K."

Thanks, guy. (I know who, but he doesn't work there anymore.)

* Look, Something Else **will happen**. Maybe you will be nickel-and-dimed to death; just little things, like setting all the options new to *TOOL 2.0*, or making the 30 little subdirectories be the exact name it requires. Maybe you'll just have to add one line of linker directives to the 58 files that comprise your code. That takes *time*; tell me all about it. I just got done doing it to Spectre 3.1!

* You **absolutively, possilutely, must** spend that extra 4/5 time before *TOOL 2.0* will start working for you. You might as well go play golf. [Editor: No, that's not a typo above.]

Small's First Law of Maximum Effort ("There are NO real shortcuts") also applies in non-computer life. For instance, tonight we picked up the kids from school. There was a possibility the drugstore had some prescriptions ready for us, for a sprained ankle, but then again, it was around 5 PM and they are very busy, so they might not be ready. Sandy used Law #1 and said, "Well, if we go there on the way home, we **know** they won't be ready, but if we go home directly, they **will** have been ready, and you can drive over and pick them up." (no short trip). Neither alternative is really easier, you see?

The possibility that they would be ready and we could just pick them up on the same trip *does not exist*, except in movies.

Quantum Precedent

I hate to do this to you, but, there *is* precedent to this seeming madness, for Small's First Law, in Quantum Physics, first talked about in 1926, which is a set of rules for dealing with atom-sized things, which behave in a most odd fashion. To be quick about explaining it, the laws at the atom level really depend, believe it or not, on whether or not they are *observed*. No kidding! And considering transistors, the basic building block of an integrated circuit chip, **work** using Quantum Physics principles (the "holes" in the junction middle material, for instance), I think it's valid to use this in an Atari magazine. Also, many high-powered scientists believe that Quantum Physics, which describes what **really** happens at the atomic-level size, also applies to you-and-I sized things.

Who Split?

Quick example: Take a chunk of pitchblende rock, all over in Colorado, which naturally has uranium in it. Every now and then, a uranium atom will break down and split in half, emitting energy and (usually) 2 (or more) neutrons. (Since this is not concentrated U-235, no chain reaction or explosion happens.) Now, **which** atom will split? *We don't know*. There appears to be no way to predict it.

However . . . and here you're just going to have to trust me, (then go read about Quantum Physics, which is as close to real magic as there is.)

It matters **terribly** if this split *is observed*, by you or me or anyone. There are literally **two histories** for that atom!, both happening at the same "time" in parallel. The atom splits in one; it does not in the other. These histories are called a "space-time continuum" (literally a region for a period of time; there's nothing complex about the term, even if Star Trek keeps using it), and **only** if someone is watching, or if it will trigger something that someone is watching, will Mother Nature worry about this particle having two histories! Ma Nature rarely does more than required (like me). If you observe it, either splitting or not splitting, the "wrong" histories' space-time continuum will "collapse" (it is called that by the Quantum scientists), and cease to exist; Nature will clean up for you. But *only* then; otherwise, why bother? This is the concept of parallel histories as Richard Feynmann developed it.

(Richard is not some philosopher/moron. He's also the guy who figured out that the sub-freezing cold on launch day, 26 degrees F, caused the sealant "goop" in the Challenger's O-Ring seal to fail, blowing up the Shuttle. In a meeting of the investigation committee, he literally took a sample of the goop from the manufacturer's representative, dropped it into his ice&water (32 degree F) glass over lunch break, and waited until it got cold; then he showed the rep and the committee that the goop was no longer flexible like Play-Doh, but hardened, and incapable of sealing the solid rockets. In short, he's the hero who figured out what blew up the Challenger.)

Silent Trees Falling

Quantum Physics also clearly answers that old question, which everyone thinks is silly, "If a tree falls in the forest, but no one is there to hear it, does it make a sound?" Everyone says "yes" *because it's a stupid question*. (I've waited 17 years out of high school to finally say that!)

But. If there is no one to observe it, there may well be two alternative space-time continuums, one in which there is sound, one in which there is not. Without an observer there is no reason for Ma Nature to collapse one of the two. So possibly the answer is, "Yes and No both happen in alternate space-time continuums."

See why this ties in so nicely with the Small's First Law? Provided there is some other law forcing the maximum effort for everything ("Shortcuts Never Work" is another way of saying the First Law), which you will find in the Second Law of Quantum Physics provides a wonderful and tested model of how the process actually happens . . . two space-time continuums, one in which the prescript is not filled and we

show up; one in which it is ready and we do not show up. Whichever we select collapses the other. The one we would wish for simply **does not exist**.

It is depressing to realize that maybe a fundamental Quantum law could work this way, though.

In any meeting with computer people, or any other people, you will hear stories of Maximum Effort, usually by someone who tried a shortcut that for some weird reason did not work. I'm saying, here and now, **that things are that way naturally**. You have such things in your computer experience—that program that **would not run**, and kept you going “sideways,” if you will, using alternative approaches to try to fix it. The time must be spent.

(For an excellent layman's look at Quantum Physics, look up the book, “The Dancing Wu Li Masters.” I know the title sounds flaky, but it ties into the book. It is a clearly written, lucid explanation of quantum physics, and has in it, quote, “The most important discovery of science in human history,” a theory that *every* event in the universe affects **everything else instantly**, regardless of the speed of light. I know, I know, nothing can travel faster than the speed of light. We all got taught that since 1915.

Great Hacker

But even Steven Hawking, who is at Einstein's level, in his new book (excellent!), “Black Holes and Baby Universes,” says that faster-than-light particles are probably a *necessity* for the Universe to work correctly. (!! Look, this is STEVEN HAWKING, the man that took the Big Bang theory from the trashcan and made it just about “totally accepted” by everyone . . . and whose book, “A Short History Of Time,” was an incredible bestseller, talking about how we can determine the state of the universe something like 1 trillionth trillionth trillionth second after the Big Bang! He's not some New Age Mystic.)

Everyone thinks Black Holes are collapsed suns that have imploded, sort of, into a tiny area, with gravity so intense that light itself cannot escape. People have been writing about how Black Holes are the ultimate end of the universe, because they'll “eat” everything in their path. (And we seem to have a confirmed one, at Cygnus). But Hawking points out, particles in the Black Hole have **two histories** (does this sound familiar?). By Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle, the particle should not have to experience zero time (inside a black hole time is fouled up), where both its position and the time of that position can be predicted (violating the basic Heisenberg Uncertainty theory that only one or the other can be predicted; specifically, not both. Heisenberg's Principle is the fundamental “can't see past here” fog of the atomic world size, and has been proven by many experiments to be valid).

So, says Steven, a particle pretty well feels morally obligated to **get out of the black hole**, and the only way **that** is going to happen, because of the intense gravity that sucks in even light, is if the particle **goes faster** than the speed of light. [WOW!!] [WOW!!] This means that black holes will gradually, gradually “leak” particles until they fizzle out, all the particles gone . . . and it means **no end** of the universe via black holes. That is one amazing hack and Steven is a true subatomic Hacker, pushing the envelope, par excellence.


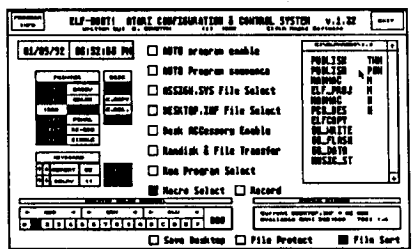
This means the century that saw the Absolute Limit of the Speed of Light may also see that limit lifted. The implications are busy, presently, rattling astronomers and physics people beyond belief.

Well, there you have it. Small's First Law, the Law of Maximum Effort: No matter what route you take, you'll get there at the same time. There are endless ways to restate it, or show examples of it, but I need to move on. (Ever changed into a “faster” lane and have it slow down? Bingo.) You see it all the time in everyday life. I just gave it a name.

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#786D: Evader, Mystic, Pshcyo Worlds

EVADER—A fast action exceptional shoot-em-up game. (C) **MYS TIC**—Dungeon Master type RPG with decent 3D dungeon graphics and good gameplay. **PSYCHO WORLDS**—Fast arcade action, wild graphics, blast the psychos; 3 separate worlds with 4 games in each. **VEGAS_BJ**—A blackjack game. (C)

#787D: K&R C Compiler

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DMJ-Soft's Sound Lab sample editor let's you edit most any type of sample, and record with your ST Replay cartridge.

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#790D: Calligrapher 3 Demo

A complete working demo of Calligrapher 3, the next generation of the ultimate writing machine from CodeHead Technologies and Working Title. Demo includes a thorough walk-through of all features plus a listing of new features and upgrade procedure. (M)

#792D: Utility No. 22

7-UP—Feature-packed word processor from Germany. Multiple documents, supports (but doesn't require) GDOS, GEM Clipboard, text preview, and much more. Shareware. Program and documentation in German. TT Compatible. **IMGVIEWR**—An .IMG file viewer that will show bitmapped (monoplane) .IMG's in its four windows and multi-plane (color) .IMG files. **JCCAL30**—A calendar generating program that prints calendars for any month(s) or year. Include pictures for each month, set the text styles, box styles, and more. Built-in drives for DeskJet and dot matrix printers. (M) **JCLABL18**—JCLabel features mailing list handling and will print mailing labels. (M) **JCVUE23**—JCView, a monochrome-only program, will edit (and

view) many different types of picture files. (M) **MDATE__25**—Beta shareware release of Make*A*Date V2.5, a Personal Information Manager that sports a Scheduler, Phone Book, ToDo List, Notes featuring File Attachments, dBASE file viewer, Phone Dialer and more. **MORSEGEN**—Reads a file of text and produces morse code at speeds ranging from 3 to 30 words per minute. **PCHROME3**—PhotoChrome 3.0 is a color picture file conversion utility that allows conversion of TARGA, GIF, RAW, and IFF file formats to the new PCS format. The PCS format allows for 32000+ color palette. **S_DRAW**—Smooth Draw has all the features of Degas Elite and more! Loads and saves lots of file formats, printing to EPSON compatible, clipping and sprite and mouse editor for programmers, and exact entry by pixel coordinate of most functions. Magnify, flip the picture, grab blocks for copying, move, flipping or saving and more. **SMOUSE1B**—CyRel Serial Mouse Manager. **TLCBOOK3**—Combination address book and date keeper prints phone books, mailing labels, date books, and date labels; allows as many entries as your system's memory will hold and has full Hot Key access. Supports any printer.

#795: Gag Programs

A collection of "gag" prg and acc by Meinolf Schneider originally written for a German magazine, but are pd. Source code included. Mono only!!! **BLACKHOL**—Turns trashcan into animated black hole! **DJANGO**—Run this, go about your business, and be prepared! **MAGIC**—Stars follow your mouse pointer! **PHYSICAL**—Gives your mouse pointer gravity! **SNOW**—Your screen is slowly hit by a snow blizzard! **TRASHY**—Your trashcan becomes animated with sound!

#796D: Games

NAARJEK3—NAARJEK III is a renegade piece of programming that rerouted access paths to the main Naarjek memory core and rewrote the software so it now controls all access to it's data core. You've been called in to "crack" Naarjek. How? That's for you to find out! (C/M) **CLUBDEMO**—Club Dominoes, the most authentic and realistic dominoes simulation available, features 1 player vs computer, 2 player computer link, 3 game variations, unique dimensional alternating backgrounds, on-line rules of play. Simple and addictive game play equals fun and incredible longevity! **INSECTA**—Space Invaders clone with super graphics and sound. Req 1 MB(C). **GALAXIAN**—Galaxians. Shareware.(C) NO TT.

#798D: Telecom No. 7

TG_EMUL—Front-end Emulator program for the "Thieves' Guild" online game provides ST users with excellent graphics, animation, speed menus, digitized sound, and visual effects. (C) **THIEVES**—Thieves' Guild Online Game for Atari ST BBSs, possibly the largest and most complex game to date for a BBS. Compatible with Ratsoft, Forem, Turbo, and Express. **ASSASSIN**—Assassin, V1.51, is an excellent online BBS game. Works with Forem, Turbo, RATSoft, etc. Instructions included. **JOUTE**—combat game played over your modem.

#799D: Utility No. 23

APPLIER—Install up to 8 applications for the same document type. **AUTO_CPU**—Automatically sets your Mega ST's CPU speed when a program is run. **AUTOFM12**—Auto File Mover automatically copies/moves/deletes files based on age or size. **BAK_DEL2**—Hard disk utility provides full or partial listings of directories or file-trees + an automatic or option delete of any file extender you choose to configure. **BLITZ145**—Hard drive defragmenter and optimizer. **BREAKUP**—Breakup splits large files. **BSPCLOCK**—Bermuda Clock 1.1 displays time with or without seconds in the upper right corner. **CACHE275**—Master Cache V2.75 features pre-caching of your FAT/DIR from C: for speeding up AUTO programs. **CWAC2__03**—Does group con-

version on most ST archival programs (e.g convert ARC to LZH, LZH to ZIP). **DLII**—A checkdisk/unerase/diskedit program that provides disk usage display; check of FAT integrity; check for lost and crosslinked clusters; some disk fix functions; automatic and manual unerase; file attribute change; disk editing, file or sector oriented; editing of harddisk boot-sector. **FASDCHK**—Hard Disk Drive Check Utility performs checks on fixed or hard disk systems. **FATCACHE**—Fatcache is a hard disk cache that speeds up some hard disk operations. **FATSPED**—Speeds up the search for free clusters on hard disk partitions. **FINDFILE**—Find File locates files by search name and displays up to 100 instances with full paths. Locate files on up to 8 hard drive partitions + A/B floppies. **FLCAT_12**—The File Catalog keeps track of the changes in the files of your hard drive (size, archive bit, etc). TT Compatible. **INTEGRITY**—Verify and compare files by creating an 'integrity' file. **LHX**—Recovers files (or at least tries to) from damaged LZH archives. It will list, test, scan for recoverable files in, and extract LZH archives. **SERFX20**—Serial Fix 2.0 corrects problems with use of ST/STe/TT Modem 1 port (or the only serial port for older ST's) with high speed modems requiring RTS/CTS operation. **SORTIE12**—Sortie v1.2 sorts any directory by name or by date (in ascending or descending order). **STZIP21**—STZip v2.1, compress and decompress files. **TLCFORM3**—Allows formatting disks with many different parameters. 'FAST' format reads and writes faster than disks formatted with skewed sectoring (twisted) and is 100% compatible with all programs.

#801D: PAD

PAD is a great art program from Germany that offers many unique options including support for Signum fonts and some great image manipulation tools. Mono, 1 meg req.

#803D: GEM Fast

GemFast PD GEM programming libraries for GEM programming on the ST including source code. Includes low-level bindings to the AES and VDI functions and a high-level library that makes GEM programming much easier.

#804D: Education No. 3

SOLUTION—Demo of Solutions, a powerful mathematical software program that works with real numbers, complex numbers, binary integers, lists, as well as programs, algebraic equations, vectors and matrices. **HOOKMATH**—A multiple choice, timed math program for ages 6 to 12 that awards the player vocally. **PILOTDEM**—Demo of Esteem Pilot, an excellent implementation of the classic, educational authoring language; mono preferred. **QPDDEM**—QuizPlus (C) V2.1 of computer-assisted instruction system; let your ST teach you! Sample lessons provide instruction (with pictures). No MEGA.

#805D: Warp 9 Utilities

Extend-O-Save Modules—FlyShip13, Fortun12, Puzzle, Pyrotech, Roll_em, Swarm. **TEN4NINE**—10 fill patterns to replace the standard GEM background. **MOVPICT12**—Moving Pictures allows you to randomize your Warp 9 background pics and Extend-O-Save modules! **CHERRYH2**—A professionally designed replacement high resolution screen font for Warp 9 users. **W9_375UP**—Patch V3.74 to bring it up to V3.75. (Disk also includes patch for updating 3.73 to 3.74.) **MANDALA**—Produces a never-ending series of changing patterns.

#806D: BarnYard, Dark Pearl, Invaders, Hangman

BARNYARD—Match various farm animals, which are hidden behind barnyard doors, by twos. A game of concentration, recommended for children age 6 and older. **DARKPEARL**—Dark Pearl, control the ball on the vertically scrolling track. Fast, colorful, smooth, graphics with multiple levels. **INVADERS**—Fast

action graphics and invaders doing some wavy, bouncy, animation! **LUCKYG61**—Lucky Guess Trivia Game with 2 trivia categories, dinosaurs and early discoverers of the world. Basic play much the same as Hangman. **HANGMAN2**—Hangman 2.0! features almost 400 new puzzles in 7 categories. (C)

#807D: Educational Games (M)

Talking Jumble—Jumbles up the ABC's and your child must put them back in the correct order. Program talks! Point and click on any letter to hear what it sounds like. **The Alphabet Monkey**—Helps little ones learn the letters of the alphabet and the keys on the Atari keyboard. **SUPER**—Super Jumble, a custom jumble program where you design your own jumbles. Alphabets, numbers, stories, clocks, foreign languages.

#808D: Educational Games

SRCHFIND—Search and Find: computer mixes up 15 different pictures on the screen and then asks your child, in a real human voice, to find one of the pictures. **MUMBOJUM.ZIP**—Talking Mumbo Jumbo, the sequel to Mumbo Jumbo. A real human voice announces each letter of the alphabet clearly. Great for kids or the sight impaired. Mono freeware.

#809D: GEM View

GEMVW223—GemView, loads VIDAS, loads and saves TARGA, loads RSC-Files (also extended INTERFACE format, no color-icon-support), color-icons will show in there monochrom version, can transfer RSC to raster-files, open a new window, when tranfering a GEM-Meta or RSC into Raster.

#810D: Planetarium (M)

Excellent German planetarium now has English menus and dialogs. 1 meg or more. Works best in high Rez or better.

#811D: Agitation

AGITATON—Agitation is easy to learn, tough to solve! The most indescribably difficult, infuriatingly impossible program you could choose to run on your Atari! Create your own custom puzzles, upload them, share them! Point and click to solve puzzles. Multiple cheat, peek and help mode. Watch the computer solve puzzles. Custom graphics and dialog boxes. **A_PUZZLE1**—16 puzzles for use with Agitation. A good mix from "as easy as they come" to "you will never solve this". Mono freeware.

#812D: Octalyser (STe)

A music editor, like SoundTracker, with lots of features. Includes a plethora of sample files. Req color STe. No TT.

#813D: WP Demos

TWRITE—That's Write 2.0 Demo is fully functional except that all Save operations, Mail Merger, and Spell checking are disabled; Printing is limited to one page with a permanent footer in place and limited to output on SLM laser printers. Additionally, many components of the complete That's Write 2 package are not included. **MTW_DEMO**—Demo of MultiWriter, a word processor fully compatible with ST Writer Elite, is fully compatible with the new MultiTOS operating system. **MBROWSE**—MasterBrowse allows you to have a virtually unlimited number of documents open at the same time, restricted only by the amount of memory available.

#814D: Demos

EMDEMO10—Demo of EmailMan, an email database dedicated to keeping track of email addresses. **MAILMNGR**—Demo of Mailing Manager ST, a new mailing list program for the ST/TT. Keep track of Friends & Family; Membership lists; Customer Lists; Newsletter & Magazine Subscriptions. Print Custom Ad-

dress Labels in any format, up to 4 across; Custom Reports; Mail Merges; Telephone Listings; Return Address Labels. **MINILDGR**—Mini Ledger has all the tools you need to completely organize your home and business financial transactions. **MARCEL**—Demo version of Marcel word processor.

#815D: Papyrus Demos

Demo of full featured German word processor.

#816D—Game Demos

LOV—Playable demo of Legends of Valour. No TT/030 or Falcon. **CUDQ**—Cudlee's Quest, another great shareware game by the author of Mrs. Munchie, Megapede, and Insectroid!

#817D: Outline Art 3 Demos

TPDEMO—Demo of TruePaint. Req 1 MB RAM, but TrueColor facilities need a Falcon. **OL3_DEMO**—Demo of Outline Art 3.0 works in ST Mono, TT Med and High, and supports external video boards, providing they provide a minimum resolution of 640*350. 4MB of RAM required! Save and export disabled, the online context sensitive help has been left out, but the rest is working fine.

#818D: Demos

ECCBDEMO—The Eliemouse Complimentary Coloring Book, V7.0. Lots of new features added to this stunning coloring program. Demo does not save picture files and there is a timed ad inserted. **NSP_DEMO**—'No Second Prize' is an incredibly smooth motorcycle racing simulator. Demo only allows you to do training races and on a limited number of tracks. **PF_DEMO**—A demo version of ProFlight Simulator.

#819D: Cyberdrome Demo

Demo version of Cyberdrome-The Hoverjet Simulator combines the realism of a real-time flight simulator with arcade action and problem solving and exploration of an adventure game. 1 MB and Color required!

#820D: Utility No. 24

EDPATCH—Updates EdHak v 2.30-2.35 to version 2.36. **EMPUS4**—Patch program to convert Tempus2.prg to Empus.prg which uses the system file selector (or UIS3, LGS, etc.). No TT030. **EXPAND15L**—Expand-o-matic v1.5, a fairly painless archiver shell, for uncompressing only. **GOGOST50**—Gogo-ST v5.0, organize your hard disk into easy to find lists of your most used programs and documents. Click on a program button and your program loads. Click on a document associated with a program and the program loads first then loads the document. **JONDOSV1**—Command Line Interface program for the ST has a good variety of DOS commands, and takes up a mere 24K when loaded and running. **MAXIKILL**—File killing utility can be timed by events to run within one second after you execute Maxi*Kill. Choose days and times for files to be killed or let it kill files every time it runs. **LZHARTSL**—Configurable LZH/ARC shell. **MDP_210**—MegaDepack undoes the compression schemes of over 50 different packing programs. **MIDINET**—Connect two or more STs via the MIDI ports and thus share disk drives. **MOIRE**—Moire-type screensaver for mono monitors. **NOSEY_II**—Searches for an ASCII string within selected files (single files or an entire directory or folder, up to 50 files. Results can be printed to your printer or to a disk file. **RDE_V2**—The "ALL-TOS" compatible form of the Mark Williams reset- proof RAMdisk with an enhanced graphic user interface. **RENMIT13**—ReNameIt disk editor lets you change your filenames to allow upper and lower case plus special characters. **SLMDRVr**—SLM Laser Printer GDOS Driver. The original SLM Laser Printer printer drivers returned a page size to applications equal to the printable area of a laser printed page. This modified driver returns the full paper size to the applica-

tion, so that margins set in the application will print more correctly. **SPBTV81**—Super Boot V8.0 lets you select which desk accessories, auto programs, and desktop.inf file to use. Set the date, time, write verify, and more. Select GEM programs to autoboot. Use function keys to select commonly used sets of files. Password protection of your hard drive. Graphic Welcome Screen & digitized sound. Stereo DMA sound. **SYQ_BACK**—Incremental backup and restore program for SyQuest drives. **TIMEDRVr**—Corner clock that also displays disk access. **PICSW101**—PicSwitch (v1.0.1) supports 20 different image formats, including GIF, IMG, Spectrum, Prism Paint, PCX, and IFF.

#821D: GER2ENG

GER2EN21—German to English translation program plays music while working. Includes 24,000 word dictionary.

#823D: GER2ENG Dictionary2

ALFRED_M—MULTLANG.ACC formatted version of 24,000 word German-English translation dictionary.

#824D: Fractals

MNDL_ALL—Fractal Generator from Holland includes a FPU version for even faster response on a machine with a math coprocessor. **FRACLAND**—Generates fractal mountains and creates animations that will actually allow you to fly through generated mountains. **FERNPRNT**—Fractal manipulation program in which you can send the image to the printer. GDOS required. **FEYDFRAX**—Another fractal generator, complete with several excellent fractals. **FRACAL**—Fractal-Program has a very fast algorithm to calculate a fractal; uses GEM Menu-Bars and multiple windows. **FPLANET**—Fractal planet generator uses the method of random faults on sphere.

#825D: MIDI

ROBO_BOP—ROBO BOP is a graphic MIDI rhythm editor that works with any drum machine or synth. Programmed grids reflect their volume with different fill patterns. Features include randomize, 250 step sequencer, user assignment of MIDI notes and channels, MIDI file save, tap write, cut/copy/paste, variable pattern length, MIDI sync, record from MIDI keyboard, merge or copy instruments and a help screen. **PAULA22A**—Improved MOD-file (sound) player for the ST/Ste/Mega Ste/TT and, possibly, Falcon. Includes Petra, a utility to play MOD files on TOS 1.04 (and up) machines that do not have a DMA chip. English doc included. **PTPLAY12**—Great new ST MOD player (11-bit sound) runs with any TOS, any RAM, any resolution, any refresh rate! **Midi Music Maker**—Play 16 different types of music and includes several new features. New features include selectable channels for transposition, playing songs from computer memory, a new technique for modifying velocity on a per channel basis, a new tempo adjust, display and selection of files on a full screen, key strokes for all menu actions, and user definable keys.

#826D: Canvas and Pixel Grabber

CANVS17A—Canvas, The Artist's Dream! v1.7c a complete graphics development package in a single program with multiple work screens, extensive modes and features including a 3D Editor and Viewer, an advanced Animation Studio, up to 4096 colours on-screen at once (on an STE, 512 on most STs), any resolutions, on-screen HotSpot zoom and much, much more! **PIXEL-DM**—Pixel Grabber Demo handles large screen resolutions; ACC operation allows use inside other programs; Handles Color converting for Icons, Mice, Sprites; Supports multiple size clipping in 3 unique modes; Supports multiple uncompressed picture formats; Saves Current Clip, All Clips, Cut Screen or Screen.

#827D: Box Car, Tuzzle, Bon Bon

BOX_CAR—Battle simulator game in which you and your opponent each drive a car, equipped with a missile, and attack each other until one of you is victorious. Both players hook up by either a null modem connection, a Hayes compatible modem (over the telephone), or you can play individually in a practice mode. **TUZLE30**—Tuzzle 3.0 now runs in a movable window. All samples have been converted to 12khz for Falcon compatibility and more samples have been added as well. This is a computerized version of the sliding tile games you played as a kid. **BON BON**—Two games from Germany. Break-out ('nuff said) and Kubis, a Tetris clone.

#828D: Polar Ice, Cybernetix

POLARICE—Arcade game has nice graphics & digitized sound. Kill the aliens before they destroy the planet by taking the water supply. **CYBERNTX**—Cybernetix, an excellent shareware Defender clone with commercial-quality graphics, terrific digitized sound, and arcade action! No TT or Mega 4 ST.

#829: Telecom No. 8

AIR_20E—Air Warrior, V2.0e is an air combat simulator for multi-player battles on GENIE. **ALADMAN**—The Aladdin 1.4 version manual for new users only. **ALADSH02**—V0.2 of Aladdin file searcher shows/searches the file list maintained by GENIE's automated front-end, Aladdin. **ALADVU20**—Browse through Aladdin library files offline and search for files on any of several fields. **GE_AST_D**—Demo of the GENIE's Assistant can sort your Aladdin Library files, strip specified files, strip file areas, strip files inside or outside of a date range, and any combination of the above options! **MCGBROWS**—Aladdin's Magic Browser enables you to convert Aladdin .DAT files to ASCII for use with other programs and has built-in options for searching and printing of the library listings. **SCRIPTD**—Aladdin script manual by Jim Lubin. **STALA161**—V1.61 of Aladdin, a terrific file utility to simplify your use of GENIE telecommunications service. Aladdin is an automatic communications tool designed to provide you with the most efficient use of the features and services of the GENIE information service. **STALKD BK**—ST Aladdin Script Tutorial introduces ST Aladdin users to scripts. **QWK CIS**—QuickCIS, v1.71, is an online navigator for CompuServe that will visit up to six forums, gathering messages and file descriptions for later perusal, offline.

#830: Buttonz Awari Demo

Here is a demo version of the new Magic Soft program, Buttonz Awari!

#831: Bugs, Frogger, Yahtzee, Kaboom

BUGS—Another millipede game, lot's of things happening on the screen. Bonus's, boss's, etc. **DROPIX_D**—Hottest block game to hit any computer system. Non-stop furious joystick action for 1 or 2 players. Demo. **FROGGER**—Features colorful graphics and smooth game play. Another conversion of a popular arcade game from days gone by. **KABOOM**—Conversion from an old 8 bit favorite, this simple little game with a high addiction rating. **NUMBR510**—Learn My Numbers is an educational game for children that speaks numbers to your child and they must find the number. **YAHITZEE**—Play Yahtzee with up to 10 players on your Atari! (Color)

#832: Angband

Angband is based on Moria, a role-playing game that enables you to assume the role of a character and attempt to master the dungeon.

#833: Psycho Pig, Utopos

PSY_PIG2—Psycho Pig II is a very nice platform game for the ST. Shareware. **UTOPOS**—Nicely done "Space War" variant,

split-screen with neat weapons. Shareware. No TT/030. STe Required!

#834: Utility No. 25

ASM_CPX—A collection of various German CPX modules. **CPXBASIC**—Complete BASIC language in a CPX. **GBENCH31**—GEM Bench v3.1. Great GEM Benchmarking program. **LHA210**—V2.10 of LHA, the full-function archiver/unarchiver for .LZH archives. **LHA_221**—V2.21 of LHARC for the ST, compatible with Quester's and a bit faster too. **STZIP23**—STZip v2.3, the best archive program for the Atari. **TRASHCPX**—Auto folder and CPX to give you a recoverable trash can. Any file that you 'delete' will be moved to a TRASH folder instead. **WIN NI**—GEM's window limit of 8 (7 plus the desktop) is removed by Geneva. This demo merely opens as many windows as possible. Geneva users will get 256. **XCONTROL**—V1.31 of the XCONTROL Panel from Atari Corporation, as well as new CPX modules which have been updated to use the new 3D object types available with the Falcon030 and MultiTOS.

#835: Atari Works No. 1

1WP2RTF—Convert First Word Plus files to the Microsoft RTF (Rich Text Format) specification. **2COLWORK**—Do two columns in AtariWorks. **ATGENIE**—3 text files with AtariWorks messages from GENIE (6/28/93-9/13/93) **AUDIOLAB**—Works template for Avery #5198 Audio Labels. **AW_BSCRD**—Tutorial and template for creation of business cards in AtariWorks. **AW_CHECK**—AtariWorks Check Register is a set of AtariWorks Spreadsheet and Database templates to aid in the creation and maintenance of a simple cash accounting system for home or small business use. **AW_PIM**—Using a daily schedule database and To-Do and informational database, I was able to use the merging capabilities of AW to create my own Day Runner-Day Timer-Franklin Planner clone. **AW_RCPBK**—A quick and dirty recipe book database and word processor template for saving and printing the family recipes. **AW_RLRS1**—3" and 9" transparent rulers with 1/8" graduations to aid in page layout in AtariWorks. Makes vertical positioning of text and graphics much simpler. **AW_YCR**—AtariWorks database to help organize video tape collections. **COLUMNS**—A work-around until AtariWorks has column support **DM2WORKS**—Convert ASCII printed Data Manager files to a format that can be easily imported into the AtariWorks database program. **IAAD**—IAAD directory converted to AtariWorks Database format. **VCRLAB**—System for printing on Avery #5199 Video Tape labels with AtariWorks.

#836: Raystart Demo

Demo version of RayStart, a very fast raytracer that runs perfectly on every Atari platform (ST/TT/Falcon) and on every VDI compatible GFX card. Save function and .PNT file import function disabled in this demo.

#837: Prism Paint II Demo

Demo of Prism Paint II (Artis Animator). In conjunction with Artis Software of Austria, we combine the powerful functionality of Artis into an animation package which is available at an upgrade path from people with Prism Paint 1.1 or 1.5B.

#838: Magic Spell

MAGSPELL—Magic Spell was originally intended for children to learn to spell, but it turns out to be fun for spellers of all ages. Make your ten best words! Guess the secret word! Score points! Included is a dictionary with over 2000 words! **ED3DEM**—EdHak 3.0 demo (file and config saving disabled) fully functional for viewing files, RAM, disk sectors, doing "Kwiksends" of text blocks to other applications. **GLOS** **SARY**—Large glossary of the most commonly used terms for Atari users and computing in general.

#839: Mega-Check

MC204.LZH—V2.04 of MEGA-Check adds enhanced keyboard support (including window scrolling). MEGA-Check 2 is a highly configurable finance manager that supports hierarchical account structures (which no other program supports!) and interactivity, making it extremely easy to use. **EZDESKDM**—Demo of EZDesk. You can create, save and automatically load your own color or black and white desktop background while retaining the original GEM desktop menu bar, icons and windows. **GROCRY31**—The Grocery Lister allows for 3000 items in the grocery file and 2000 items in the grocery list. **MSPYDEM3**—Demo of MIDI Spy, a MIDI recorder that records and plays MIDI completely in the background.

#840: Before Dawn

BMP2—Background Music Player has 25 built-in songs that will play thru your ST speaker. **BOOT_SND**—Boot Sound Player plays one or more digitized sounds during your boot-up. Using the included sound manager, you select the sounds you wish to have played, and the rate you wish them played at. **DAWN_E**—Before Dawn screen saver acc includes several neat animations and music too. Docs are in German. **DLOCK1**—Clock with large display. **LITLNET**—LittleNet networks two Ataris through MIDI cables; easy to use and compatible with most software.

#841: Editors/Viewers

EDITH—Shareware text editor features a nice interface and lots of power. **EVERST**—A feature-packed Ascii Text Editor from Germany. Program and Docs are in English. Multiple windows, can use GDOS fonts. **M_VIEW10**—Mountain View general purpose text viewer may be run as a stand alone text viewer or installed to replace the desktop 'Show/Print/Cancel' feature. **TCL**—Shareware command-line interpreter is one of the most ambitious of the compact CLIs currently available, and includes most of the major commands of MS-DOS, a must-have CLI for power users.

#842: Utility No. 26

AUSPCK15—GEM-based German archive utility shell. **AU TORAIS**—Desk acc automatically tops the window that is under the mouse, so you don't have to click the mouse button to bring a window to the top. **BJ_ENVLP**—A GEMvelope loadable .GLP config file and complete documentation to provide BJ users with envelope printing bliss. **DCSEA22B**—DC SEA v2.2 creates self-extracting files from ARC,LZH, ZIP, and ZOO files. **DCX22B**—DC Xtract Plus v2.2b allows you to extract ARC, LZH, ZIP, and ZOO from within one program. **ELFBACK2**—Hard disk backup and restore for TT. Not ST compatible. **FLCAT_14**—File-Cat v1.4 is a utility to track changes in disk or hard drive files over time and to do incremental back-ups based on those changes. **GEMBENCH325**—GEMBench 3.25, a great benchmarking utility. **HS_M014**—German AUTO-folder patch fixes the ST, STE, Mega STE and TT serial-port speed limitations on Modem Port 1. **REN_LHA**—Rename LHAarchives according to file compression type automatically. **STOSFX21**—Fix STOS run-only programs to work with new TOSs. **TOSX_2**—TOS Exit causes TOS/TTP programs to wait for a keypress before returning to the desktop so that error messages/etc. can be read.

#843: Teradesk at Tuxedo Junction

The materials on this disk go with Henry K. van Eyken's article, "Teraboot at Tuxedo Junction," in the November, 1993 issue of Current Notes. The disk contains a step-by-step guide for assembling a boot-disk with Wout Klaren's alternative desktop, "TeraDesk," as the principal element. All the materials needed for the assembly are on this disk, except the PD program, "The Chameleon."

#844: Nethack

V3.13 of Nethack, more monsters, more artifacts, more rooms, and, most of all, more fun! Nethack is the ultimate character based dungeon role playing game. No other role playing game has this level of detail.

#845: IdeaList

V3.30 of IdeaList adds a printer spooler to the package. IdeaList is a simple, yet versatile, tool used to print out ASCII files and files in WordPlus format. control all your printer functions and improve your print quality. Four different kinds of font size are selectable; text can be printed in up to 9 columns; lines that are too long are corrected automatically; front and back page output can be separated; editable header lines; all margins are adjustable; line numbering option; editable ASCII file lets you build your own printer driver; download fonts can be used by Laserjet and dot matrix compatibles; separate management of continuous and single feed paper.

#846: Space Invaders, JitterBugs, Prensorium

INV_PAIN—Two shareware games. Space Invaders is very faithful to the original, but requires a 50/60mhz toggle program for US machines (included). Painter owes a debt to Qix and Miner 2049er. **PRENS**—Prensorium is an arcade puzzle type game the object of which is to destroy all enemies on each of fifty levels. Get the baddies to chase you and let them run over things like bombs and traps. Great graphics and sound. **JITTRBUG**—JitterBugs, a multi-player arcade game, will support up to 32 players in real time competition. (Color)

#847: Utility No. 27

WINX21—GEM patch expands GEM of TOS versions, up to v4.04, to include some of the features available in MultiTOS such as more windows, control elements for background windows, and an expanded user interface. **LHARC230**—V2.30 of the LHarc (*.LZH) archiver for the ST. LHarc compresses and uncompresses LZH and LHA files. **MDTST102**—Test your FAX modem for Class, Caller ID, FAX Speed, Silent Answer, Voice Mail capability, and also tells you firmware and chipset info. Freebie from Toad Computers. **PROED10F**—Pro-Ed 1.0f is a quality TOS text editor. No word wrap, and 80 character limit per line, but it includes extensive and powerful control key, function key, and command mode commands. Quality manual included (TOC and Index). Shareware. **VOL_UTIL**—Now you can make quick work of labeling entire libraries of disks. Simple GEM interface, works as a program or accessory. A must have! **RDD3**—Revenge Document Displayer v3.0 is packed with features: load up to 200 documents at once, call outside editor and utility, display Packlce files, full GEM clipboard support, display ARC/LZH/ZOO/ZIP/ARJ files, print or save block. All this and SPEED too. Shareware. **STALKCL**—Desk acc provides ST owners with a talking clock. **UNEKIT**—Purchase PC pre-formatted diskettes and use this utility to give each a unique serial number (required for accurate use with the ST).

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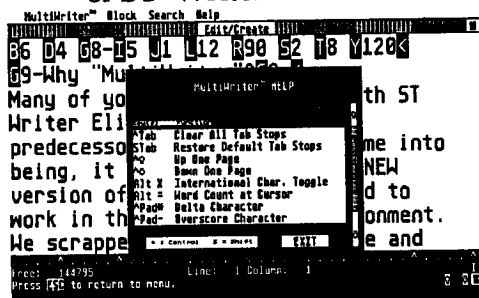
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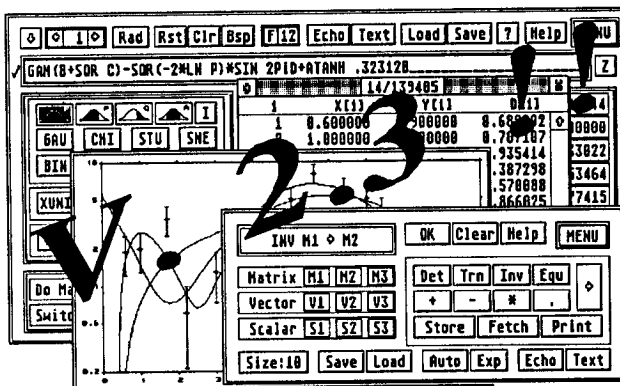


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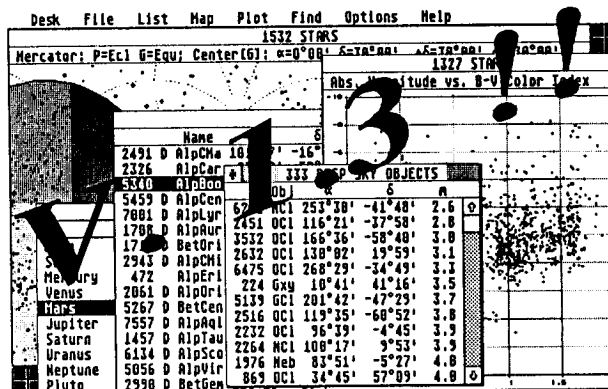


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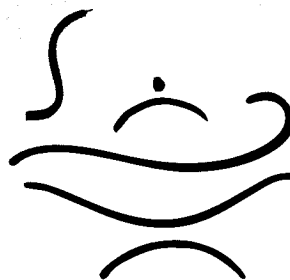
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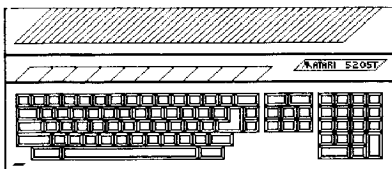
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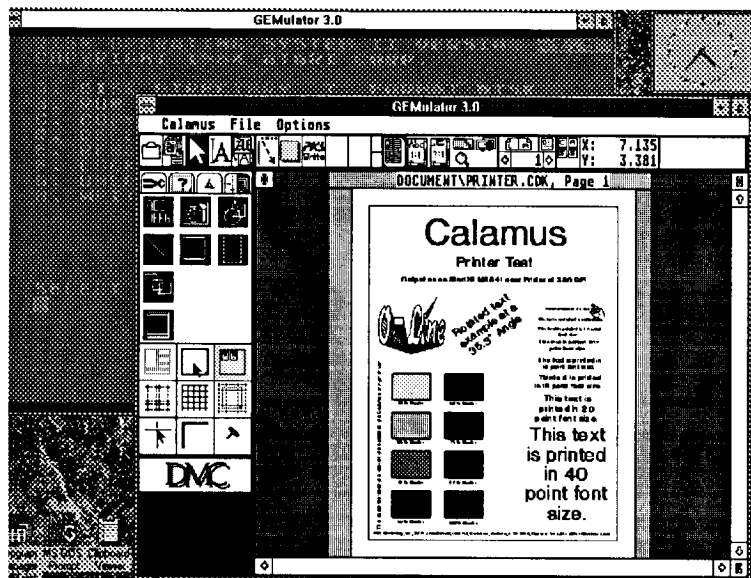
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